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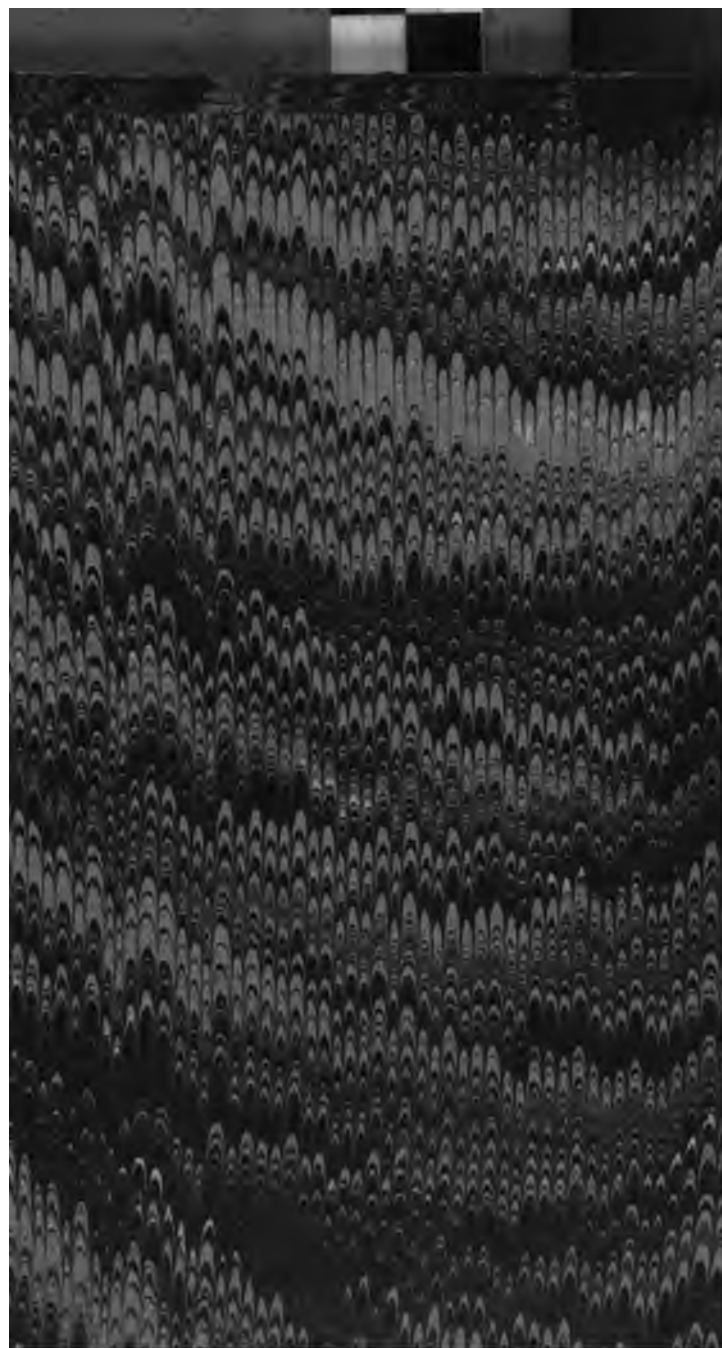
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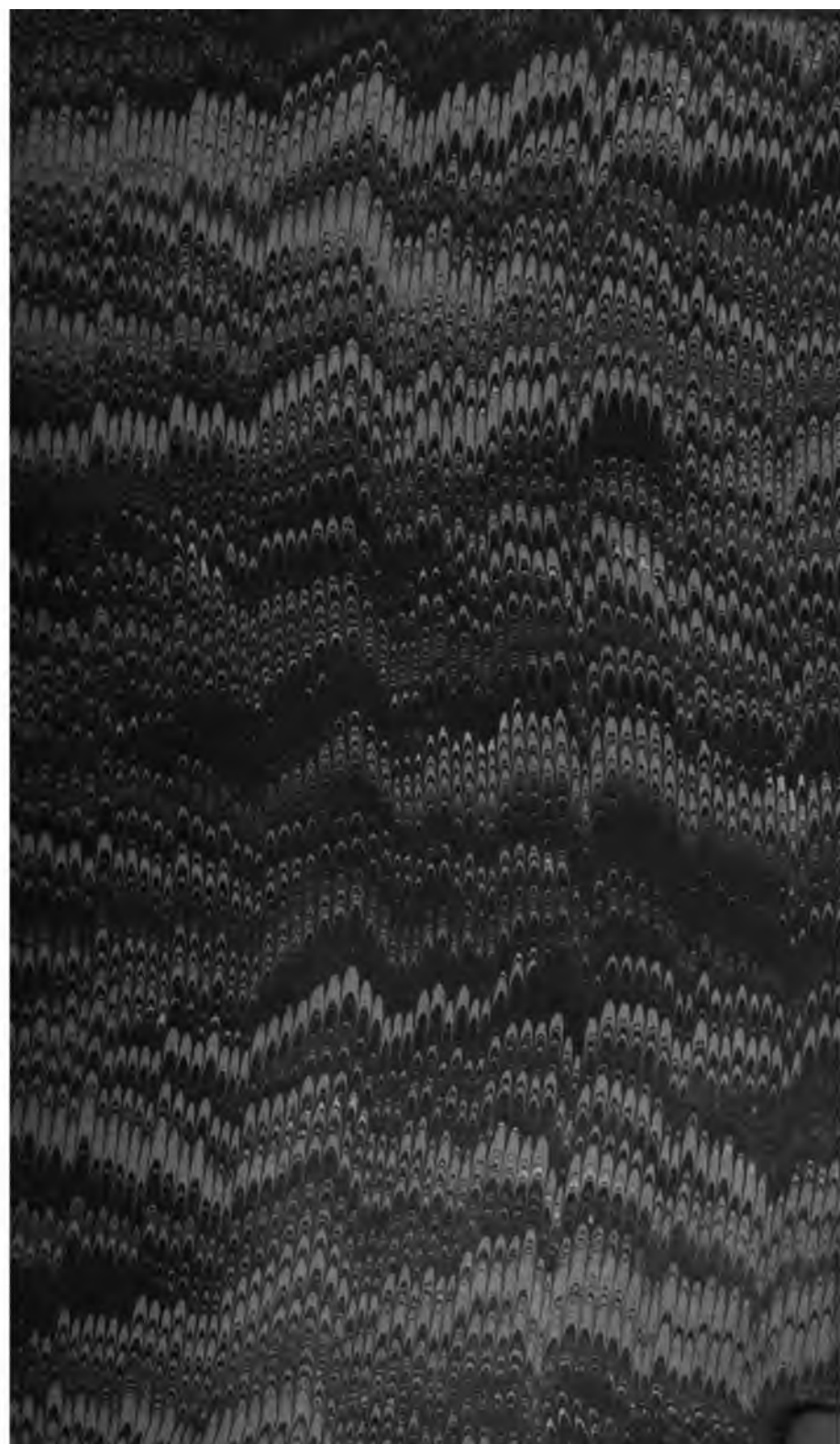
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H. H. Miller 1874

CONTRIBUTIONS,

BIOGRAPHICAL, LITERARY, AND PHILOSOPHICAL,

TO

THE ECLECTIC REVIEW.

BY

JOHN FOSTER,

AUTHOR OF "ESSAYS ON DECISION OF CHARACTER," &c., &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CRITICAL ESSAYS,

&c. &c.

[October, 1811.]

The Friend ; a Literary, Moral, and Political Weekly Paper, excluding personal and party politics, and the events of the day. Conducted by S. T. COLERIDGE, of Grasmere, Westmoreland. Royal 8vo.

It was with no small pleasure we saw any thing announced of the nature of a proof or pledge that the author of this paper was in good faith employing himself, or about to employ himself, in the intellectual public service. His contributions to that service have, hitherto, borne but a small proportion to the reputation he has long enjoyed of being qualified for it in an extraordinary degree. This reputation is less founded on a small volume of juvenile poems, and some occasional essays in periodical publications, than on the estimate formed and avowed by all the intelligent persons that have ever had the gratification of falling into his society.

After his return, several years since, from a residence of considerable duration in the South East of Europe, in the highest maturity of a mind, which had, previously to that residence, been enriched with large acquisitions of the most diversified literature and scientific knowledge, and by various views of society both in England and on the continent ; his friends promised themselves, that the action of so much genius, so long a time, on such ample materials, would at length result in some production, or train of productions, that should pay off

VOL. II.

B

some portion of the debt due to the literary republic, from one of the most opulent of its citizens. A rather long period, however, had elapsed, and several projects had been reported in the usual vehicles of literary intelligence, before this paper was undertaken. An idea of the mental habits and acquirements brought to its execution, will be conveyed by an extract from the prospectus, which was written in the form of a letter to a friend.

"It is not unknown to you that I have employed almost the whole of my life in acquiring, or endeavouring to acquire, useful knowledge, by study, reflection, observation, and by cultivating the society of my superiors in intellect, both at home and in foreign countries. You know too, that, at different periods of my life, I have not only planned, but collected the materials for many works on various and important subjects; so many indeed, that the number of my unrealized schemes, and the mass of my miscellaneous fragments, have often furnished my friends with a subject of raillery, and sometimes of regret and reproof. Waiving the mention of all private and accidental hindrances, I am inclined to believe that this want of perseverance has been produced in the main by an over-activity of thought, modified by a constitutional indolence, which made it more pleasant to me to continue acquiring, than reduce what I had acquired to a regular form. Add too, that almost daily throwing off my notices or reflections in desultory fragments, I was still tempted onwards by an increasing sense of the imperfections of my knowledge, and by the conviction that, in order fully to comprehend and develope any one subject, it was necessary that I should make myself master of some other, which again as regularly involved a third, and so on, with an ever-widening horizon. Yet one habit, formed during long absences from those with whom I could converse with full sympathy, has been of advantage to me—that of daily writing down in my memorandum or common-place books, both incidents and observations; whatever had occurred to me from without, and all the flux and reflux of my mind within itself. The number of these notices, and their tendency, miscellaneous as they were, to one common end ("*quid sumus, et quid futuri gignimur,*" *what we are, and what we are to become: and thus from the end of our being to deduce its proper objects*), first encouraged me to undertake the Weekly Essay of which you will consider this letter as the prospectus."

Being printed on stamped paper, these essays were conveyed by the post, free of expense, to any part of the country. In the mode of publication, therefore, and what may be called the exterior character of the project "The Friend" was an imitation of those sets of essays which, from the Tatler down to the Rambler, and several

much later works, had first supplied entertainment and instruction in small successive portions, during several months or years, and then taken their rank among books of permanent popularity. Mr. Coleridge has correctly distinguished, in a brief and general manner, the objects to which these works were mainly directed, and rendered a tribute of animated applause to their writers; at the same time bespeaking the candour of his readers to a series of essays, which should attempt to instruct after a very different method. It was avowed that they would aim much more at the development of general principles; it would be inferred, of course, that they would be of a much more abstract and metaphysical character. Mr. Coleridge fairly warned those whom he invited to become his readers, that, though he should hope not unfrequently to interest the affections, and captivate the imagination, yet a large proportion of the essays were intended to be of a nature, which might require a somewhat resolute exercise of intellect.—It was not proposed to terminate the series at an assigned point; it might be expected to proceed as long as the writer's industry and resources should command the public approbation. With one or two considerable interruptions, it reached as far as twenty-eight numbers, and there ended so abruptly that a memoir of Sir Alexander Ball was left unfinished. At several points in the progress of the work, the writer confessed that the public patronage was not such as to make it probable he could carry it forward to any great length; but no explanation was given of the suddenness of its discontinuance.

Perhaps, it may be questioned, now after a portion of the intended work has been given, whether the project did not involve some degree of miscalculation. Even the consideration of a rather excessive price was likely to affect the success of a work which, though coming with some of the exterior marks of a newspaper, was yet to derive nearly as little aid from the stimulant facts and questions of the day, as if it had been a commentary on Aristotle or Plato. A still more unfavourable augury might, perhaps, have been drawn from the character of

Mr. Coleridge's composition, as taken in connexion with the haste inseparable from a weekly publication. The cast of his diction is so unusual, his trains of thought so habitually forsake the ordinary tracts, and therefore the whole composition is so liable to appear strange and obscure, that it was evident the most elaborate care, and a repeated revisal, would be indispensable in order to render so original a mode of writing sufficiently perspicuous to be in any degree popular. And it is equally evident that the necessity of finishing a sheet within each week, against a particular day and hour, must be totally incompatible with such patient and matured workmanship. A considerable portion of the short allotment of time might, in spite of every better resolution, be beguiled away in comparative indolence; or it might be consumed by casual and unforeseen avocations; or rendered fruitless by those lapses into langour and melancholy, to which genius, especially of the refined and poetic order, is extremely subject; or even wasted in the ineffectual endeavour to fix exclusively on some one of many equally eligible subjects. It was to be foreseen that the natural consequences would be, sometimes such a degree of haste as to leave no possibility of disposing the subject in the simplest, clearest order, and giving the desirable compression, and lucidness, and general finishing to the composition; sometimes, from despair of doing this, a recourse to shifts and expedients to make up the number, in a slighter way than had been intended, and perhaps promised; and often a painful feeling of working at an ungracious task, especially if, in addition, the public approbation should be found to be less liberally awarded than had been expected. Such compulsory dispatch would have been a far less inconvenience in the conducting of a paper intended merely for amusement, or for the lightest kind of instruction, or as a weekly commentary on the contemporary measures and men—a department in which the facility and attractiveness of the topics, and the voracity of the public, exempt the writer from any severity of intellectual toil, or solicitude for literary perfection: but it was almost necessarily

fatal in a work to be often occupied with deep disquisitions, and under the added disadvantage that the author had been previously much less accustomed to write than to think. When, besides, the work aspired to a very high rank in our permanent literature, there was perhaps an obvious impolicy in subjecting it to such circumstances of publication, as should preclude the minute improvements of even a tenth revision. It should seem probable, on the whole, that a mode better adapted to the effective exertion of Mr. Coleridge's great talents might have been advised, in the form of a periodical publication to appear in larger portions, at much longer intervals.

Some of the consequences thus to be anticipated from the plan of the undertaking, are actually perceptible in the course of the work. The writer manifests great indecision as to the choice and succession of his subjects. After he appears to have determined on those to be treated in the immediately ensuing numbers, those numbers, when they come, may be employed on totally different subjects,—introduced by accidental suggestion—or from their being such as would be more easily worked, in the brief allowance of time, into the required length and breadth of composition. Questions avowedly intended to be argued very early, as involving great fundamental principles, are deferred till the reader forgets what the author has said of their importance. Various subjects are adverted to, here and there in the course of the work, as to be hereafter investigated, and are never mentioned again. In some instances, the number to which the commencement or the conclusion of an important inquiry has stood over, will be found made up perhaps, for the greater part, of letters, or short fragments with translations from a minor Italian poet. Several of the numbers, towards the latter end of the series, are employed on the character of the late Sir Alexander Ball, which, however meritorious, was not probably, in the opinion of the majority of the readers, of sufficient celebrity to claim so considerable a space in an expensive work; especially while several most in-

teresting points of inquiry, of which they had been led to expect an early investigation were still, and indefinitely deferred. It is fair, however, to quote the author's apology or vindication, in which, toward the conclusion of the series, he attributes to his reader, the procrastination or relinquishment of the refined disquisitions, which he should himself have been happy to prosecute.

"The remainder of my work, therefore, hitherto, has been devoted to the purpose of averting this mistake," (that which had imputed to him a coincidence of opinion with the "French physiocratic philosophers") "as far as I have not been compelled by the general taste of my readers to interrupt the systematic progress of the plan, by essays of a lighter kind, or which at least required a less effort of attention. In truth, since my twelfth number, I have not had courage to renew any subject which *did* require attention. The way to be admired, is to tell the reader what he knew before, but clothed in a statelier phraseology, and embodied in apt and lively illustrations. To attempt to make a man wiser, is of necessity to remind him of his ignorance: and, in the majority of instances, the pain actually felt is so much greater than the pleasure anticipated, that it is natural that men should attempt to shelter themselves from it by contempt or neglect. For a living writer is yet sub judice; and if we cannot follow his conceptions or enter into his feelings, it is more consoling to our pride, as well as more agreeable to our indolence, to consider him as lost beneath, rather than as soaring out of our sight above us. Itaque id agitur, ut ignorantia etiam ab ignominia liberetur. Happy is that man, who can truly say, with Giordano Bruno, and whose circumstances at the same time permit him to *act* on the sublime feeling——

"Procedat nudus, quem non ornant nubila,
Sol! Non conveniunt Quadrupedum phaleræ
Humano dorso! Porro Veri species
Quæsitæ, inventæ, at patefactæ, me efferat!
Etsi nullus intelligat,
Si cum naturâ et sub lumine,
Id versè plusquam satis est." p. 335.

It may easily be believed that Mr. Coleridge had cause to complain of the impatience of some of his readers, under those demands of a strong mental exertion which some of his essays have made on them; but the degree of this required exertion is greatly underrated, we think, in the following observations in the same number.

"Themes like these, not even the genius of a Plato or a Bacon could render intelligible without demanding from the reader, *thought* sometimes,

and *attention* generally. By *thought* I here mean the voluntary production in our own minds of those states of consciousness, to which, as to his fundamental facts, the writer has referred us : while *attention* has for its object, the order and connexion of thoughts and images, each of which is in itself already and familiarly known. Thus the elements of geometry require attention only ; but the analysis of our primary faculties, and the investigation of all the absolute grounds of religion and morals, are impossible without energies of thought in addition to the effort of attention. The Friend never attempted to disguise from his readers, that both attention and thought were efforts, and the latter a most difficult and laborious effort ; nor from himself that to require it often, or for any continuance of time, was incompatible with the nature of a periodical publication, even were it less incongruous than it unfortunately is, with the present habits and pursuits of Englishmen. Accordingly, after a careful re-perusal of the preceding numbers, I can discover but *four* passages which supposed in the reader any energy of thought and voluntary abstraction. But attention I confess two-thirds of the work hitherto have required. On whatever subject the mind feels a lively interest, attention, though always an effort, becomes a delightful effort ; and I should be quite at ease, could I secure for the whole work, as much of it as a party of earnest whist-players often expend in a single evening, or a lady in the making up of a fashionable dress. But where no interest previously exists, attention, (as every schoolmaster knows) can be procured only by terror : which is the true reason why the majority of mankind learn nothing systematically, but as schoolboys or apprentices."

Not to dwell on the arbitrary and rather tenebrious distinction between thought and attention, (which might be given as a fair specimen of the extent of the demand made on the reader's mind in a multitude of passages,) we cannot help saying, that this is a somewhat too reserved acknowledgment—that the "Friend" has produced a volume, of which a considerable portion is hard to be understood, and some passages of which it may be doubted whether any one reader, after his very best efforts, has felt sure that he did so understand as to be able to put the meaning into other equivalent words of his own. We cannot but think that, in some still later re-perusal, the author himself will have perceived that not a few of his conceptions, taken as detached individual thoughts, are enounced with an obscurity of a somewhat different kind from that which may seem inevitably incident, in some degree, to the expression of thoughts of extreme abstraction. And sometimes the conjunctive principle among several thoughts that come in immediate succession is so unobvious, that

the reader must repeatedly peruse, must analyse, we might almost say, must excruciate, a considerable portion of the composition, before he can feel any confidence that he is master of the connexion ;—and at last he is a little sure of having a real hold of the whole combination, that he would not trust himself to state that particular part of the “ Friend’s ” opinions and sentiments to an intelligent inquirer. When he could perhaps give, in a very general form, the apparent result of a series of thoughts, he would be afraid to attempt assigning the steps by which his author had arrived at it.

There can be no doubt that, by such patient labour as the adopted mode of publication entirely forbade, the writer could have given, if we may so express it, more roundness and prominence to the logical fibres of his composition, and a more unequivocal substance to some of its more attenuated components ; in short left nothing obscure but what was invincibly and necessarily so, from the profound abstraction and exquisite refinement of thought, in which Mr. Coleridge would have extremely few equals in whatever age he had lived.

Our contracted limits will not allow more than a very brief notice of the several subjects on which the author’s intellect and imagination have thrown their light and colours, in a more fixed or in a momentary manner, in the course of this desultory performance. It would be fully as interesting, though a more difficult task, to discriminate some of the qualities which distinguish his manner of thinking and writing : and we shall make a short attempt at this, though with no small degree of diffidence in our ability to render the more subtle characteristics palpable in description. Some of them are almost as undefinable, as the varied modifications of the air by which very susceptible organs can perceive the different state of that element as subsisting in one district and in another ; almost as undefinable, as the tinge by which the light of the rising and setting sun in spring or autumn, is recognised as of a quite different character from its morning and evening radiance in the other seasons.

And while we are making this reference to the ele-

ments and phenomena of nature, we will confess that this author, beyond any other, (Mr. Wordsworth is next) gives us the impression, or call it the fancy, of a mind constructed to bear a certain indescribable analogy to nature—that is to the physical world, with its wide extent, its elements, its mysterious laws, its animated forms, and its variety and vicissitude of appearances. His mind lives almost habitually in a state of profound sympathy with nature, maintained through the medium of a refined illusion of genius, which informs all nature with a kind of soul and sentiment, that bring all its forms and entities, animate and inanimate, visible and invisible, into a mystical communion with his feelings. This sympathy is, or involves, an exceedingly different feeling from that with which a strictly philosophic mind perceives and admires in nature the more definable attributes of variety, order, beauty, and grandeur. These are acknowledged with a vivid perception; but, in our author's powerful imagination, they become a kind of moral attributes of a half-intelligential principle, which dimly, but with mysterious attraction, discloses itself from within all matter and form. This sympathy has retained him much more effectually in what may be called the school of nature, than is usual to men of genius who enter so much into artificial society, and so extensively study the works of men: and the influences of this school have given that form to his habits of thinking which bears so many marks of analogy to the state of surrounding physical nature. To illustrate this we may observe, that he perpetually falls on analogies between moral truth and facts in nature: in his figurative language he draws his similes and metaphors from the scenes of nature in preference to the departments of art—though these latter are also very much at his command: his ideas have much of the unlimited variety of nature; they have much also of its irregularity, being but little constrained into formal artificial method: there is in his train of thinking a great deal of what may be called colour and efflorescence, and but little of absolutely plain bare intellectual

material : like nature as to her productions, he seems as willing to bestow labour and completeness on little thoughts as on great ones : we may add, he does not show any concern about mixing the little and great together,—sublime and remote ideas, and humble and familiar ones, being readily admitted, if they happen to come in immediate succession.

The above description of our author's sympathy with nature, and his mystical perception of something like soul and sentiment residing in all material elements and forms, will not be misunderstood to impute to him any thing like a serious adoption of the atheistical principle of Spinoza, or of the Stoic or Platonic dogmas about the Soul of the World. This converse with all surrounding existence is, in the perfect consciousness of our author's mind, no more than the emanation of that mind itself ; imparting, in its meditative enthusiasm, a character of imaginary moral being and deep significance to all objects, but leaving his understanding in the full and solemn belief of a Supreme Intelligence, perfectly distinct from the whole universe. But there is strong reason to suspect, that certain of his poetical contemporaries renounce the idea of such a Divine Intelligence, in their fancy of the all-prevading, inexplicable something, which privileged and profoundly thoughtful spirits may perceive, and without illusion, in the light of the sun, in clouds, in silent groves, and in the sound of winds and mountain torrents.

But we ought to have remarked, first, on some of the more easily definable of the distinguishing properties of the "Friend's" intellectual character. Among the foremost may be mentioned the independence and the wide reach with which he thinks. He has given attendance in all the schools of moral and metaphysical philosophy, ancient and modern, but evidently has attended there rather to debate the matter with the professors, than with submissive homage to receive their dictates. He would have been a most factious and troublesome pupil in the academy of Pythagoras. He regards all subjects and doctrines as within the rightful sphere of free examina-

tion : and the work affords evidence, that a very large number of them have actually been examined by him with extraordinary severity. Yet this freedom of thinking, supported as it is by the conscious possession of great power, and exceedingly ample and diversified knowledge, does not degenerate into arrogance ; a high and sincere respect being uniformly shown for the great intellectual aristocracy of both the past and present times, but especially of the past. Of the eminent writers of our own country, he evinces a higher veneration for those of the seventeenth, than those of the subsequent century, and of the present time ; and professes to have been of late years more familiar with them, and to have involuntarily acquired some degree of conformity to their manner of thinking and to their style.

Another instantly apparent distinction of our author's manner of thinking, is its extreme abstractedness. Considering that many of his subjects are not of that class which, by the necessity of their nature, *can* be discussed in no other than a metaphysical manner, he has avoided, in a wonderful and unequalled degree, all the superficial and obvious forms of thought which they might suggest. He always carries on his investigation at a depth, and sometimes a most profound depth, below the uppermost and most accessible stratum ; and is philosophically mining among its most recondite principles of the subject, while ordinary intellectual and literary workmen, many of them barely informed of the very existence of this Spirit of the Deep, are pleasing themselves and those they draw around them, with forming to pretty shapes or commodious uses, the materials of the surface. It may be added, with some little departure from the consistency of the metaphor, that if he endeavours to make his voice heard from this region beneath, it is apt to be listened to as a sound of dubious import, like that which fails to bring articulate words from the remote recess of a cavern, or the bottom of the deep shaft of a mine. However familiar the truths and facts to which his mind is directed, it constantly, and as if involuntarily, strikes, if we may so speak, into the invisible and the

unknown of the subject: he is seeking the most retired and abstracted form in which any being can be acknowledged and realised as having an existence, or any truth can be put in a proposition. He turns all things into their ghosts, and summons us to walk with him in this region of shades—this strange world of disembodied truth and entities.

He repeatedly avows, that it is less his object to teach truth in its most special and practical form, and in its detailed application, than to bring up into view and certainty a number of grand general principles, to become the lights of judgment, on an endless variety of particular subjects. At least this was the proposed object of the earlier part, the first twenty or thirty numbers, of the intended series. These principles were to be brought into clearness and authority, partly by statement and argument in an abstract form, and partly by showing them advantageously in operation, as applied to the trial and decision of several interesting questions. But the abstruseness often unavoidable in the pure intellectual enunciation of a principle, prevails also in an uncommon degree, in the present work, through the practical illustrations—even when the matter of those illustrations consists of very familiar facts. The ideas employed to explain the mode of the relation between the facts and the principle, are sometimes of such extreme tenuity as to make a reader who is anxious to comprehend, but unaccustomed to abstraction, feel as if he were deficient by nearly one whole faculty, some power of intellectual sight or tact with which he perceives the author to be endowed,—for there is something that every where compels him to give the author credit for thinking with great acuteness, even when he is labouring in vain to refine his own conceptions into any state that can place him in real communication with the author's mind. The surpassing subtlety of that mind is constantly describing the most unobvious relations, and detecting the most veiled aspects of things, and pervading their substance in quest of whatever is most latent in their nature. This extreme subtlety is the cause of more than one kind

of difficulty to the reader. Its *necessary* consequence is that refinement of observation on which we have so prolixly remarked ; but it has another consequence, the less or greater degree of which depended on the author's choice. He has suffered it continually to retard him in, or divert him from, the straightforward line of thought to his object. He enters on a train of argumentative observations to determine a given question. He advances one acute thought, and another, and another : but by this time he perceives among these which we may call the primary thoughts, so many secondaries—so many bearings, distinctions, and analogies—so many ideas starting sideways from the main line of thought—so many pointings towards subjects infinitely remote—that, in the attempt to seize and fix in words these secondary thoughts, he will often suspend for a good while the progress toward the intended point. Thus each thought that was to have been only *one* thought, and to have transmitted the reader's mind immediately forward to the next in order and in advance, becomes an exceedingly complex combination of thoughts, almost a dissertation in miniature : and thus our journey to the assigned point (if indeed we are carried so far, which is not always the case) becomes nothing less than a visit of curious inspection to every garden, manufactory, museum, and antiquity, situated near the road, throughout its whole length. Hence too it often happens, that the transitions are not a little perplexing. The transition directly from one primary thought, as we venture to call it, in the train to the next, might be very easy : we might see most perfectly how, in natural logic, the one was connected with the other, or led to it : but when we have to pass to this next principal thought in the train, from some divergent and remote accessory of the former principal idea, we feel that we have lost the due bearing of the preceding part of the train, by being brought in such an indirect way to the resumption of it.

The same kind of observation is applicable to the comparisons and metaphors with which our author illustrates and adorns his speculations. In this component

of good writing, we believe he has no superior in this or any other age. His figures are original, and various, and often *complexly* apposite, to a degree of which we do not at present recollect any example. They are taken indifferently from any part of a prodigious sphere of knowledge, and presented with every possible advantage of rich and definite expression. In the choice of them he very justly scorns, what has been noticed as a leading point of contradistinction of the French orators and poets from ours, the fastidiousness which declines similes taken from things of so humble a quality as to give to the figure a character of meanness. While he can easily reach, if he pleases, as far into remoteness and magnificence as the aphelion of a comet, for an object of illustrative comparison, he is not afraid to turn to literary account in the next paragraph, even a thing of so little dignity as those fastenings of garments called *hooks and eyes*. But the fault we venture to charge is, analogously to what we have said of the more austere intellectual parts of the composition, the frequent extension of a figure into a multiformity which beguiles both the author and the reader from the direct and pressing pursuit of the main object. When the object is grave and important truth, the beauties of imagery, when introduced with a copiousness greatly beyond the strictest necessities of explanation, should be so managed as to be like flowery borders of a road: the way may have on each side every variety of beauty, every charm of shape, and hue, and scent, to regale the traveller: but, it should still be absolutely a *road*—going right on—with defined and near limits—and not widening out into a spacious and intricate wilderness of these beauties, where the man that was to travel is seduced to wander. When an apt figure occurs to our author, his imagination (which has received with wonderful accuracy, and retained with wonderful fidelity, *all* the ascertainable points of appearance and quality of almost all objects), instantaneously expands and finishes this figure, within his own mind, into a complete object or scene, with all its absolute and relative distinctions and circumstances; and his intel-

lectual subtlety suddenly perceives, besides its principal and most obvious analogy with the abstract truth he is stating, various other more refined and minute analogies and appositenesses, which are more gratifying to his own mind than the leading analogy, partly from the consideration that only a very acute perception would have discerned them, and partly because a double intellectual luckiness is more unusual than a single one. Now, we have mentioned the *complexity* of appositeness, the several-fold relation between the figure and the truth to which it is brought as correspondent, as one of the *excellencies*, of our author's figures: and we have done so, because none but a writer of great genius will very frequently fall on such figures—and because a very specific rather than a merely general relation, an interior and essential rather than a superficial and circumstantial analogy, between the subject and the corresponding figure, is a great excellence as exhibiting the laws of reason prevalent through the operations of imagination; and it would often be found that the specific and pointed appropriateness of the comparison consists in its containing a double analogy. But when a subtle intelligence, perceiving something much beyond this duplicity of relation, introduces a number of perhaps real and exquisite, but extremely recondite correspondences, the reader, though pleased with the sagacious perception, so long as not confused by the complexity, is, at the same time, certainly diverted from the leading purpose of the discourse.

It is not alone in the detection of refined analogies that our author too much amplifies his figurative illustrations. He does it sometimes in the way of merely perfecting, for the sake of its own completeness, the representation of the thing which furnishes the figure, which is often done equally with philosophical accuracy and poetic beauty. But thus extended into particularity, the illustration exhibits a number of colours, and combinations, and branchings of imagery, neither needful nor useful to the main intellectual purpose. Our author is therefore sometimes like a man, who, in a work that

requires the use of wood, but requires it only in the plain bare form of straight-shaped poles and stakes, should insist that it shall be *living* wood, retaining all its twigs, leaves, and blossoms. Or, if we might compare the series of ideas in a composition to a military line, we should say that many of our author's images, and of even his more abstracted conceptions, are supernumerarily attended by so many related, but secondary and subordinate ideas, that the array of thought bears some resemblance to what that military line would be, if many of the men, veritable and brave soldiers all the while, stood in the ranks surrounded with their wives and children.

Of the properties which we have attempted, we sincerely acknowledge very inadequately, to discriminate and describe as characteristic of our author's mode of writing, the result is—that readers of ordinary, though tolerably cultivated faculties, feel a certain deficiency of the effective force which they believe such an extraordinary course of thinking ought to have on their minds. They feel, decisively, that they are under the tuition of a most uncommonly powerful and far-seeing spirit, that penetrates into the essences of things, and can also strongly define their forms and even their shadows—and that is quite in earnest to communicate, while they are equally in earnest to obtain, the most important principles which such a mind has deduced from a severe examination of a vast variety of facts and books. And yet there is some kind of haze in the medium through which this spirit transmits its light, or there is some vexatious dimness in the mental faculty of seeing: so that looking back from the end of an essay, or of the volume, they really do not feel themselves in possession of any thing like the full value of as much ingenious, and sagacious, and richly illustrated thinking as ever, probably, was contained in the same proportion of writing.

We would not set down much of the difficulty of comprehending, so much complained of, to the *language*, so far as it is distinguishable from the thought; with the exception of here and there a scholastic phrase, and a

certain degree of peculiarity in the use of one or two terms—especially *reason*, which he uses in a sense in which he endeavours to explain and prove, that all men are in equally full possession of the faculty which it denominates. Excepting so far as a slight tinge of antiqueness indicates the influence of our older writers, especially Milton and Bacon, on the complexion of our author's language, it is of a construction original in the greatest possible degree. That it could not well be otherwise may easily be supposed, when, premising, as we have done, the originality of the author's manner of thinking, we observe that the diction is in a most extraordinary degree conformed to the thought. It lies, if we may so speak, close to the mental surface, with all its irregularities, throughout. It is therefore perpetually varying, in perfect flexibility and obsequiousness to the ideas; and, without any rhetorical regulation of its changes, or apparent design, or consciousness in the writer, is in succession popular and scientific, familiar and magnificent, secular and theological, plain and poetical. It has none of the phrases or combinations of oratorical common-place: it has no settled and favourite appropriations of certain adjectives to certain substantives: its manner of expressing an idea once, gives the reader no guess how the same idea will be expressed when it comes modified by a different combination. The writer considers the whole congregation of words, constituting our language, as something so perfectly and independently his own, that he may make any kind of use of any part of it that his thinking requires. Almost every page therefore, presents unusual combinations of words, that appear not so much made *for* the thought as made *by* it, and often give, if we may so express it, the very colour, as well as the substantial form, of the idea. There is no settled construction or cadence of the sentences; no two, perhaps, of about the same length being constructed in the same manner. From the complexity and extended combination of the thought, they are generally long, which the author something less than half-

apologizes for, and therefore something more than half defends. We will quote what he says on this point.

"Doubtless, too, I have in some measure injured my style, in respect to its facility and popularity, from having almost confined my reading, of late years, to the works of the ancients, and those of the elder writers in the modern languages. We insensibly admire what we habitually imitate; and an aversion to the epigrammatic unconnected periods of the fashionable *Anglo-Gallican* taste, has too often made me willing to forget, that the stately march and difficult evolutions, which characterize the eloquence of Hooker, Bacon, Milton, and Jeremy Taylor, are notwithstanding their intrinsic excellence, still less suited to a periodical essay. This fault I am now endeavouring to correct, though I can never so far sacrifice my judgment to the desire of being immediately popular, as to cast my sentences in the French moulds, or affect a style which an ancient critic would have deemed purposely invented for persons troubled with asthma to read, and for those to comprehend who labour under the more pitiable asthma of a short-witted intellect. It cannot but be injurious to the human mind never to be called into effort; and the habit of receiving pleasure without any exercise of thought, by the mere excitement of curiosity and sensibility, may be justly ranked among the worst effects of novel-reading. It is true, that these short and unconnected sentences are easily and instantly understood: but it is equally true, that, wanting all the cement of thought as well as of style, all the connections, and (if you will forgive so trivial a metaphor) all the *hooks-and-eyes* of the memory, they are easily forgotten; or rather, it is scarcely possibly they should be remembered. Nor is it less true that those who confine their reading to such books, dwarf their own faculties, and finally reduce their understandings to a deplorable imbecility."—p. 166.

He might, in contradiction to the vulgar notion that long sentences *necessarily* show the author guilty of what is termed diffuseness, have added, that length of sentences furnishes a capital mean of being concise; that, in fact, whoever is determined on the greatest possible parsimony of words, *must* write in long sentences, if there is any thing like combination in his thoughts. For, in a long sentence, several indispensable conditionalities, collateral notices, and qualifying or connecting circumstances, may be expressed by short members of the sentence, which must else be put in so many separate sentences; thus making two pages of short sentences to express, and in a much less connected manner, what one well-constructed long sentence would have expressed in half a page:—and yet an unthinking reader might very

possibly cite these two pages as a specimen of concise writing, and such a half page as a sample of diffuseness.

We had intended to make a few remarks on the several essays in this volume, considered as to their subjects; and on the most prominent of the principles endeavoured to be illustrated and established. But we have dwelt so long on the more general qualities of its intellectual and literary character, that our readers will very willingly excuse us from prolonging a course of observations, in which we have by no means succeeded to our wish in the attempt to convey a general idea of the most extraordinary production that has, at any time, come under our official notice. We confess, too, that we should feel no small degree of diffidence in undertaking any thing like an analysis of disquisitions so abstruse, so little reduced to the formal arrangement of system, so interrupted and unfinished, and so often diverging to a great distance from the leading direction.

The subjects largely discussed are few. Among them are, the duty and laws of communicating truth, including the liberty of the press; the theories of the several most celebrated political philosophers, or schools of philosophers; errors of party spirit; vulgar errors respecting taxation; the law of nations; Paley's doctrine of general consequences as the foundation of the criterion of morality; sketches of Sir Alexander Ball; the proper discipline for rising, in point of intellectual freedom and vigour, above the general state of the age; and several other topics of less comprehensive denomination. But no adequate guess can be made, from these denominations, at the variety and latitude of the inquiries and observations. There is not a great deal expressly on the subject of religion; the intended statement of the author's general views of it having been delayed till the work prematurely closed; but there are many occasional references in a spirit of great seriousness. He asserts the radical depravity, to a very great extent, of human nature, though in forms of language most widely different, to be sure, from that of orthodox sermons and bodies of divinity. As the basis, however, of some of

his principles of moral philosophy, he claims a certain profound and half mystical reverence for the mental and moral essence and organization of man, which we find it somewhat difficult to render. He is a most zealous assertor of free-agency. In one place the word Methodism is used exactly in the way in which it is employed by those whom the author knows to be fools, profligates, or bigots. He is perfectly apprized, how much of intelligent belief and ardent piety is comprehended within the tenets and the state of the affections, to which this term of opprobrium is generally applied; and we were astonished therefore to see him so far consenting to adopt what he knew to be the lingo of irreligion.

A portion of his political reasonings and reflections, is retrospective to the times of the French revolution; and distinguishes and censures, with very great judgment and eloquence, the respective errors of our aristocratic and democratic parties at that time. Some interesting references are made to the author's own views, and hopes, and projects at that period. As those views and projects had nothing to do with revolutions in England, we wish that some passages expressed in the tone of self-exculpation had been spared. It was no great harm, if a young man of speculative and ardent genius saw nothing in the political state of any country in Christendom to prevent his wishing, that a new constitution of society could be tried somewhere in the wildernesses of America. In his professing to have very long since renounced the visionary ideas and wishes which, under various modifications of the notion and the love of liberty, elated so many superior minds in that eventful season, we were anxious to see him preserve the dignity of keeping completely clear of the opposite extreme of approving all things as they are—to see him preserve, in short, the lofty spirit in which he wrote, many years since, his sublime “Ode to France.” And there is in the work less to displease on that head, than in many instances of the “impetuous recoil” of men of talents from the principles of violent democracy. But we confess we have perceived a more favourable aspect than we should deem compatible with

the spirit of a perfect moralist, philanthropist, and patriot, towards the present state of political institutions and practices. We should think that at least these are not times to extenuate the evil of enormous taxation ; to make light of the suggestion of the superior benefit of employing a given number of men rather in making canals and building bridges than in destructive military expeditions ; to celebrate the happiness of having the much greater part of a thousand millions of a national debt, and the attendant benefit of a paper-currency ; or to join in reprobating any party who are zealous for a reform of the legislature and political corruptions.—There is, however, in the work, much acute speculation on political systems that has no direct reference to the practical politics of the day. It should be observed too, that, beyond all other political speculators, our author mingles important moral and philosophical principles with his reasonings.

The most of what may be called entertainment, may perhaps be found in a number of letters written from Germany by a young Englishman, who passed among his college companions by the name of Satyrane, and whom, if there were not so much said or implied in his praise, accompanied too by some slight expression as if he were not now surviving, we should mightily suspect to be no other than the author himself.

A whole number (the thirteenth) is occupied with the story of a tragical event that happened at Nuremberg, a little before Mr. Coleridge first saw that place. The principal personages were a baker's orphan and outcast daughter, and a washerwoman. He is very particular in asserting the truth of the account ; but if he had not, we should have believed it nevertheless ; for the plain reason, that we think it surpasses the powers of fiction, the powers of invention of even Mr. Coleridge. No abstract can be given to make it at all intelligible ; but it is so strange, so horrible, and so sublime, that we should think meanly of the feelings of any person, who, after reading it, would not turn with indifference, from the comparative insipidity of any thing to be found in tragedy or romance.

We ought to have given a few extracts from the work ; but we did not know where to select them, amidst such a wilderness of uncommon ideas. Many other passages may be more interesting than the following representation of one of Luther's skirmishes with Satan, in the Wartburg, a castle near Eisenach, in which he was confined many months, by a friendly and provident force, and where our author was shown the black mark on the wall, produced, as every visitant is told, by the intrepid reformer's throwing his ink-stand at the enemy.

"If this Christian Hercules, this heroic cleanser of the Augean stable of apostacy, had been born and educated in the present age, or the preceding generation, he would doubtless have held himself for a man of genius and original power. But with this faith alone he would hardly have removed the mountains which he did remove. The darkness and superstition of the age, which required such a reformer, had moulded his mind for the reception of ideas concerning himself, better suited to inspire the strength and enthusiasm necessary for the task of reformation, ideas more in sympathy with the spirits whom he was to influence. He deemed himself gifted with supernatural impulses, an especial servant of heaven, a chosen warrior, fighting, as the general of a small but faithful troop, against an army of evil beings, headed by the prince of the air. These were no metaphorical beings in his apprehension. He was a poet indeed, as great a poet as ever lived in any age or country ; but his poetic images were so vivid, that they mastered the poet's own mind. He was possessed with them, as with substances distinct from himself: Luther did not *write*, he *acted* poems. The Bible was a spiritual, indeed, but not a *figurative armoury*, in his belief ; it was the magazine of his warlike stores, and from thence he was to arm himself, and supply both shield, and sword, and javelin, to the elect. Methinks I see him sitting, the heroic student in the Wartburg, with his midnight lamp before him, seen by the late traveller in the plain *Bischofsroda*, as a star on the mountain. Below it lies the Hebrew Bible open, on which he gazes, his brow pressing on his palm, brooding over some obscure text, which he desires to make plain to the simple boor, and to the humble artizan, and to transfer its whole force into their own natural and living tongue. And he himself does not understand it ! Thick darkness lies on the original text : he counts the letters, he calls up the roots of each separate word, and questions them as the familiar spirits of an oracle. In vain : thick darkness continues to cover it ! not a ray of meaning darts through it. With sullen and angry hope he reaches for the Vulgate, his old and sworn enemy, the treacherous confederate of the Roman Anti-Christ, which he so gladly, when he can, rebukes for idolatrous falsehoods, which had dared place

'Within the sanctuary itself their shrines
Abominations !—

Now—O thought of humiliation—he must entreat its aid. See ! there

has the aly spirit of apostacy worked in a phrase, which favours the doctrine of purgatory, the intercession of saints, or the efficacy of prayers for them. And what is worse than all, the interpretation is plausible. The original Hebrew might be forced into this meaning: and no other meaning seems to lie *in* it, none to hover *over* it in the heights of allegory, none to lurk *beneath* it even in the depths of Cabala! This is the work of the tempter! It is a cloud of darkness, conjured up between the truth of the sacred letters and the eyes of his understanding, by the malice of the evil one, and for a trial of his faith! Must he then confess, must he subscribe the name of Luther to an exposition which consecrates a weapon for the hand of the idolatrous hierarchy? Never! never!

"There still remains one auxiliary in reserve, the translation of the Seventy. The Alexandrine Greeks, anterior to the church itself, could intend no support to its corruptions—the Septuagint will have profaned the altar of truth with no incense for the nostrils of the universal bishop to snuff up. And here again his hopes are baffled! Exactly at this perplexed passage had the Greek translator given his understanding a holiday, and made his pen supply its place. O honoured Luther, as easily mightest thou convert the whole city of Rome, with the pope and the conclave of cardinals inclusive, as strike a spark of light from the words, and nothing but words, of the Alexandrine version. Disappointed, despondent, enraged, ceasing to *think*, yet continuing his brain on the stretch, in solicitation of a thought, and gradually giving himself up to angry fancies, to recollections of past persecutions, to uneasy fears and inward defiance, and floating images of the evil being, their supposed personal author, he sinks, without perceiving it, into a trance of slumber: during which his brain retains its waking energies, excepting that what would have been mere *thoughts* before, now (the action and counterweight of his outward senses, and their impressions being withdrawn) shape and condense themselves into *things*, into realities! Repeatedly half-waking, and his eye-lids as often re-closing, the objects which really surround him form the place and scenery of his dream. All at once he sees the arch-fiend coming forth on the wall of the room, from the very spot perhaps, on which his eyes had been fixed vacantly during the perplexed moments of his former meditation; the ink-stand, which he had at the same time been using, becomes associated with it; and in that struggle of rage, which in these distempered dreams almost constantly precedes the helpless terror by the pain of which we are finally awakened, he *imagines* that he hurls it at the intruder, or not improbably in the first instant of awakening, while yet both his imagination and his eyes are possessed by the dream, he *actually* hurls it. Some weeks after, perhaps, during which he had often mused on the incident, undetermined whether to deem it a visitation of Satan to him in the body or out of the body, he discovers the dark spot on the wall, and receives, it as a sign and pledge to him of the event having actually taken place."—p. 125.

We cannot conclude without expressing an earnest wish, that this original thinker and eloquent writer may be persuaded to put the literary public speedily in possession, by successive volumes of essays, of an ample por-

tion of those refined speculations, the argument and the strongest illustrations of which he is well known to have in an almost complete state in his mind—and many of which will never be in any other mind, otherwise than as communicated from him. The chief alteration desirable, for his readers' sake, to be made in his mode of writing, is a resolute restriction on that mighty profusion and excursiveness of thought, in which he is tempted to suspend the pursuit and retard the attainment of the one distinct object which should be clearly kept in view; and, added to this, a more patient and prolonged effort to reduce the abstruser part of his ideas, as much as their subtle quality will possibly admit, to a substantial and definable form.

[August, 1837.]

Early Recollections, chiefly relating to the late Samuel Taylor Coleridge, during his long residence in Bristol. By JOSEPH COTTLE. 2 vols. Post 8vo.

IN a preface Mr. Cottle explains, though with some reserve as to circumstances, the manner in which this work originated ; adverts to the conditions which several classes of persons would, respectively, require to be observed in writing the history of such a man ; and maintains the obligation of the rule under which he has proceeded, of explicit unqualified truth.

The friends with whom Mr. Coleridge was most associated in his latter years, designing to prepare a comprehensive memoir, applied to Mr. Cottle, as a person known to have been intimately acquainted with him in his youth, and at intervals of the middle stage of his life, requesting him to furnish the materials, very defectively afforded from any other quarter, for that portion of the personal history. After a consideration of the labour it would cost to examine, select, digest, and illustrate the memorials in his possession, and of the infelicitous character of much that he would, in conscientious faithfulness, have to relate, he declined the office. A renewed application, however, turned his thoughts again on the subject, so as to set his memory in exercise with a revived interest, and to induce him to look into a repository of papers which had long remained undisturbed. By degrees the scenes, and incidents, and sentiments of times long past, returned so vividly on his mind, as to bring him to the determination of working into a regular form his recollections and written materials.

But the question arose, what kind of record would be deemed admissible as a part of the work projected by Coleridge's executors. Would they be willing to admit

an unreserved exposure, set forth with a particularity of circumstances, of the grand moral malady of the person to be commemorated? Finding there would be an insuperable objection to this, and regarding such impartiality as essential to the integrity and usefulness of biography, our author had to choose whether to abandon the undertaking, after he had employed considerable labour on it, or to execute it as a separate and independent work. And by that time he had become too much interested in it, and had begun to entertain too strong a presumption of its possible usefulness, to be willing to throw it finally out of his hands. As he proceeded in his course of researches and recollections, his materials accumulated so much beyond his expectation, that a very severe rule of exclusion must have been applied to limit the work to the dimensions first designed.

It is most truly "a plain unvarnished tale." And it bears the striking peculiarity that a sincere and admiring *friend* has exhibited the dark and deplorable, as fully as the bright and laudable, parts of the character. For the author was warmly, almost enthusiastically, attached to Coleridge, during the season of their personal intimacy; and has unalterably retained for him, since its cessation, a cordially benevolent sentiment, combined with that admiration of his genius which was an involuntary tribute, rendered independently of all personal regards.

He has asked himself what is the object, and what the law, of biography. Why should a formal exhibition be made of any man's life and character? Not for mere amusement; for that purpose an ingenious fiction might do better. Not merely to make it or keep it known that such a person has existed; that a certain human conformation of qualities and faculties, under an individual name, has had his allotment under the sun, in assigned time and place; thus to stand recorded as one matter of fact among innumerable others. We remember that Coleridge has somewhere pronounced the worthlessness of bare facts (those of biography, no doubt,

included), as viewed separately from principles and doctrine.

The philosophers say that the chief, or one of the chief, uses of biography is to assist the study of human nature, as exemplified and illustrated by the particular specimen, in which we may verify certain principles available to a general theory. But if so, the specimen ought to be set before us in its plain reality; every thing in its consistence distinctly seen; no artifice to modify its appearance, by abstracting or disguising any of its components, falsify their proportions, or giving any of them an arbitrary prominence or colour.

The same may be said when the moralists tell us, with much gravity, that the recorded lives of men, various in character, situation, and course of action, constitute a sort of theatre, in which are represented, with far more salutary impressiveness than in any didactic thesis of reason or eloquence, the virtues and vices, in all their forms, degrees, mixtures, causes, and consequences. When they tell us that here, instead of dry abstract discourse, soporific lecture, vague generality, we have morality alive, the qualities of humanity coming before us warm, embodied, and in action, bearing with them or on them the palpable tokens of their good and evil, uttering an earnest voice to deter or persuade, we may justly require that there be no deceptive lights or shades, that nothing of importance be retained behind the scenes, that there be no management to conceal one thing by dilating another, and that the voices which speak to us should faithfully reveal all that it may profit us to know.

But then the futility of the larger portion of biography! If composed by writers distant in time or place, or both, from the persons to be commemorated, and without the aid of memorials by contemporaries immediately cognizant of the facts, it can have little of individual characteristic verity. It will probably be no better for resemblance than would be, for the representation of a personal form, a bust, of which time, the elements, and accidents, have worn off all the nicer markings and the

distinctness of feature. If written by a known or suspected enemy, it is rejected of course. But most commonly it is the work of friends, whose very judgment is beguiled even when they mean to be honest; or who are willing to excuse to themselves a conscious treachery to judgment in favour of a person who has possessed their affection or respect; or (a frequent case) whose vanity is seeking a flattering reflection on themselves from a fine image set forth of a relation or friend, or acquaintance, whom they are ambitious to claim as having been a friend; or (also a common case) who are restless to figure in authorship, and eagerly seize an opportunity to shine in the pomp of such eulogy as would have made the subject himself, if he could have anticipated it, blush for shame.

Some of our readers will remember instances of having seen, in the full width of a book, or the abridged space of an oration or obituary, a celebration of a person with whom or with whose character they had been well acquainted. And when they have seen each good quality lauded without discrimination or measure, talents magnified, hardly a *peccadillo* acknowledged, or but just hinted, in the palliating protective neighbourhood of a virtue; and then have compared this portraiture with what they positively knew of the person, they have been compelled to exclaim, How worthless is panegyric! how faithless is biography!

The reader of the present work will go but a little way in it before he sees in how different a manner the author has performed his office. Coleridge's name and character have been too much and too long before the public to have any one unapprised, that a wonderful splendour of genius suffered a malignant moral eclipse during a large portion of his life. But the extent of that dark encroachment will be rendered far more distinctly apparent by this publication; which combines with an assemblage of the facts obvious to the view of spectators, emphatically sad and affecting testimonials from the eminent unhappy person himself.

It is, indeed, a most humiliating and melancholy spec-

tacle: a mind at once of vast comprehension and minute and exquisite perception; opulent in multifarious knowledge; sympathetic with every thing good and amiable; ardent in admiration of the great, the noble, the sublime; but subjected, enslaved, degraded, and tormented by one tyrant habit; and that habit formed on a kind of indulgence of which many persons may wonder how the allurements should be so irresistible; especially when they see how severely it became its own punishment. That punishment fell on the conscience with even more deadly infliction than on the bodily frame. Many of the men of talent who have been the slaves of vicious habits have lived under a very lax conviction, some of them in a disbelief or contempt, of revealed religion. Some of them who did retain from their education a certain thoughtless impression of its truth and authority, were so ignorant of its nature, and so seldom reminded of it, that they were but slightly and transiently disturbed by some vague idea, never consolidated into faith, of the Christian laws, the Supreme Judge, and a future retribution. But Coleridge was a firm and even zealous believer in Christianity; an exercised theologian; and, subsequently to the early stage of his inquiries and opinions, held a creed accordant, in the most material points, with what has been denominated the evangelic scheme of doctrine. To be, notwithstanding a constant recognition of all this, together with every other remonstrant consideration, and under the solemn menaces which such a faith was incessantly darting on the soul, and with the consciousness, all the while, of great intellectual power—still to be the hopeless victim of a vice abhorred while surrendered to; to have it clinging, and gnawing, and insatiable; to be, like Prometheus, chained for the vulture's repast—this is truly an exhibition fraught with all the powers of tragedy to raise pity and terror. It is but a feeble image for comparison that is recalled to us in the description of some fine fleet and powerful animal, desperately and vainly bounding and plunging over the wilderness under a leopard fixed with fangs and talons over its crest. The appropriate image

would be that of a beautiful spirit, closely and relentlessly pursued, grappled at, poisoned, and paralyzed by a demon from the dark world.

That such a representation does not exaggerate, will be seen in some of the recitals, and certain of the letters, produced in these volumes.

A brief indication of the very miscellaneous contents may not be unacceptable, though so much has been published concerning Coleridge, and through so many channels, since his decease, and though so many of our readers will, no doubt, obtain a sight of the book itself.

Our author's acquaintance with him began (about the end of 1794) in connexion with a circumstance remarkably adapted to discredit genius in the estimation of plain practical folk ; showing indeed that *their* class is quite as necessary in the world as poets and philosophers ; and that genius, though disciplined in high speculation, may have some time to wait before becoming mated with sound judgment, or what is conventionally called common sense. It was well to give an out-of-the-way name (Pantisocracy) to so curious a thing as a scheme, originated by Coleridge, and acceded to by Southey and two other literary young men, for commencing, in the wilds of North America, a new form of society and polity ; on the principle of undivided property, labours in common, unerringly proportioned by willingness and ability, the results equitably shared without question asked of vulgar arithmetic ; in short an experiment (if that be not too sceptical a word) of the purest theory of democratic equality. It was presumed that this *beau ideal* of a community would not only be realized by the original fraternity, the patriarchs of the colony, but carried prosperously down through succeeding generations.

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If we wonder through what coloured spectacles the deliberate projectors of such a scheme looked on mankind, it is to be noted that the leader was then, and for a considerable time forward, of that theological school which denies the radical depravity of human nature, and of the philosophical school which was then sounding

with the jargon of its "perfectability." He was to know better in due time, and has recorded his conviction in remarkable and striking terms.

The colonization scheme was not more poetical in the prospective vision of its felicities than in the calculation of means for the very first movement in preparation. A ship was to be freighted with provisions, implements, and all imaginable requisites for creating the predestined Eden (where there should be no tempter or fall) in the "waste howling wilderness." And many pleasant musings, no doubt, there were on the gentle gales to waft the adventure across the Atlantic; and images of the vista brightening in fairy gleams through the gloom of an American forest. The party were drawing one after another to the rendezvous at Bristol, in expectation of a speedy adieu to a land most inhospitable and malignant, as it then truly was, to all liberty, equity, and peace. But no ship volunteered its decks; no cargo collected spontaneously on the quay. The surprising truth came out that such things would obey no talisman but, plainly, that of money; and money there was none, not even enough to pay a few weeks' hire of the lodgings in which the party were expecting the hour to go on board the *Argo*.

The design was, however, to be prosecuted, at all events; and, as some expedient must be thought of for "raising the wind," which should first blow the vessel to the point of embarkation, and then over the ocean, an available resource was suggested in the delivery of courses of lectures, on moral, political, and theological subjects, by Coleridge, and on some departments of history, by Southey. The prospectuses are here given; and the width of the field undertaken to be surveyed, and the curiosity and difficulty of some of the topics, afford a presumptive proof of very extensive reading and study—unless we should suspect there might be somewhat too much of the self-sufficiency of youth. They obtained, however, the approbation and applause of their auditors. The *political* tone of the lectures was in declared hos-

tility to the spirit and measures of the government. Mr. Pitt was the object of execration.

There was an early indication of one of the failings so disastrous through subsequent life, in the circumstance that Coleridge, having requested and obtained Southey's consent that he should give one of the lectures set down in the scheme of the latter, and being accordingly announced for the splendid theme of "The Rise, Progress, and Decline of the Roman Empire," just troubled himself no farther about it.

"At the usual hour the room was thronged. The moment for commencement arrived. No lecturer appeared. Patience was preserved for a quarter, for half an hour—but still no lecturer. At length it was communicated to the impatient assembly 'that a circumstance exceedingly to be regretted, would prevent Mr. Coleridge giving his lecture that evening.' Some few present learned the truth; but the major part retired under the impression that Mr. Coleridge had either broken his leg, or that some severe family affliction might have occurred. His rather habitual absence of mind, with the little importance he generally attached to engagements, renders it likely that, at this very time, he might have been found composedly smoking his pipe, and lost in profound musings on his divine Susquehannah."—vol. i. p. 38.

It is not explained exactly by what gradation of time and reflection the Pantisocratic passion ebbed away. Coleridge appears to have remained the longest afloat, and the last to be stranded. He reproached with bitterness his chief associate's unfaithfulness, as he charged it, to what he had regarded as almost a religious league and covenant.

He had written divers short poetical pieces, which, under the pressure for money, were brought into negotiation with Mr. Cottle, at that time a bookseller and publisher, who is quite justified in mentioning the liberal proposals which he voluntarily made to terms of publication. While the friendly allowance to draw the money as wanted, previously to furnishing the stipulated compositions to the printer, was promptly acted upon, the article came not to hand but through a tedious succession of delays, promises, and excuses for non-fulfilment, which no publisher less kind and personally attached would have tolerated.

In 1795 Coleridge married, and betook himself to a rural cottage, "on the banks of—the Susquehannah?—no, the Severn," at Clevedon, a pleasant abode, in a humble style; but which, his biographer says, did not withhold his imagination from fondly prolonging its revels in the regions of that same Susquehannah. As to certain matters, indispensable, on either side of the globe, how commodiously the poetic imagination could leave them out of account, and leave its possessor to be surprised at being called upon to hear and write their uncouth names, is shown by a missive, soon received by Mr. Cottle, in Bristol, containing a list, dictated of course by his domestic companion, of divers culinary utensils, and articles for immediate and daily consumption, which he requested his friend to procure and send without delay, as things of which none of the Muses had beforehand signified the necessity. They were conveyed to him with a speed and copiousness which might remind him of the obsequious genii in some Arabian tale.

At this point the "Recollections" turn off from Coleridge, into a long miscellaneous discussion, relating, in the first instance, to a sanguine, mercurial, more than half-crazed, young man, of the name of Gilbert, a fanatical devotee to astrology, and one of the party for the Susquehannah; a curiosity worth a passing notice; but the sample of whose hallucinations, given in the Appendix, might have been spared. The almost forgotten name of Mrs. Yearsley is recalled, for the purpose of vindicating, to a considerable degree, an extraordinary, if not perfectly amiable woman, from the unqualified condemnation of the panegyrists of Hannah More; whose conduct, beyond all doubt benevolently intended, did certainly savour very considerably of the aristocratic spirit. We are not aware whether there has been elsewhere so particular an account of the flagrant tyranny of a profligate set of domestics by whom, from a strange and culpable want of resolution, Mrs. More suffered herself to be oppressed and almost insulted, and her income to be wasted, during several years of her later life; and her final escape from whom, in abandoning her favourite

residence, was judged to require the attendance of a party of her friends to save her from some outrage of abuse.

Family affection must be the admitted plea for the author's desire to give a marked distinction to his brother Amos. In connexion with this notice there is a kind of parenthesis, extended through many pages; which we regret that Mr. Cottle had not been advised to omit. It is an elaborate argument, in a long series of counts, to repel and requite a rude assailment of himself and his brother by Lord Byron, when running-a-muck among his literary contemporaries, in a juvenile satire. As against *him* such a thing is labour thrown away. Nobody, but the party aggrieved, will take the trouble to think or care about the question of justice or wrong in the random or spiteful rigs of a witty lampooner. The amusement afforded by his hits and bites is not neutralized by any conviction of their malice. The wiser way is to let it all alone. It would be little better than ludicrous to go into a grave arraignment, on a particular point, of so wild and reckless a spirit as Lord Byron; delighted with his power of indiscriminate annoyance, and doubly delighted as he would have been, and as his wholesale admirers will be, to see that annoyance tell in the irritation of its object. As well might you prosecute in a court of law H. B., the clever caricaturist. A laboured defensive and reactive traverse of an old ground of offence, while it will leave the satirist's nettles just where they were, will but expose the indiscretion of needlessly handling them again; as also some defect of philosophy in retaining so long the irritation of the first contact. We hope that, in the probable event of a new edition, the author will be induced to exclude the pages in question, together with the verses recited from his "Expostulatory Epistle," printed many years since.

Returning to Coleridge, we find him willing, for a short time, to fancy himself happy. But very soon divers inconveniences, partly of the locality, and partly created by his own temperament and habits, grew to a fatal competition with the roses that invested the cottage,

the salubrious air, the rural and marine scenery, and the connubial felicity. There was a longing for the excitements, the varieties, the libraries, the convivial talking-parties, the admiring listeners, the opportunities for figuring, of the great town. Accordingly he is transferred, after a few weeks, to close apartments, amidst the smoke, and bustle, and noise of Bristol. Here he was to set himself to the real working business of completing his volume of poems. And what a grievance was the task, and what a mortification to fail of the promised performance, is curiously illustrated in a letter written on being informed that, while he was out of the house, a note (returned unopened) had come from Mr. Cottle; which, being in fact only a friendly invitation to dinner to meet one of his admirers, his conscience had read, unseen, as a remonstrance against his dilatoriness.

“ My dear Sir,

“ It is my duty and business to thank God for all his dispensations, and to believe them the best possible; but, indeed, I think I should have been more thankful if he had made me a journeyman shoemaker, instead of ‘an author by trade.’ I have left my friends; I have left plenty; I have left that ease which would have secured a literary immortality, and have enabled me to give the public works, conceived in moments of inspiration, and polished with leisurely solicitude; and, alas! for what have I left them? for ———, who deserted me in the hour of distress, and for a scheme of virtue impracticable and romantic! So I am forced to write for bread! write the flights of poetic enthusiasm when every minute I am hearing a groan from my wife. Groans, and complaints, and sickness! The present hour I am in a quickset hedge of embarrassment, and whichever way I turn a thorn runs into me! The future is cloud and thick darkness. Poverty, perhaps, and the thin faces of them that want bread looking up to me! Nor is this all. My happiest moments for composition are broken in upon by the reflection that I must make haste. I am too late! I am already months behind! I have received my pay beforehand. O wayward and desultory spirit of genius! Ill canst thou brook a taskmaster! The tenderest touch from the hand of obligation wounds me like a scourge of scorpions!”—Vol. I., p. 114.

From his appointed biographers there will be expected a plain statement respecting the advantages, position, and prospects which he here represents himself, without any sign of conscious blame, to have sacrificed. From the pecuniary difficulties which so embittered his lot, and

were relieved only by strangers casually become friends, occasion is taken by Mr. Cottle to reflect in terms of strong reproach, though without pointing distinctly to individuals, on the unworthy conduct of Coleridge's family, in neglecting, casting off, such a man from their care and kindness. It is known that in his letters, written to one friend especially, too confidential for publication, he expressed himself with bitterness of sorrow and indignation on this subject.

The urgency of his circumstances stimulated his prolific faculty of projecting. One literary phantasm after another presented itself, and perhaps stayed long enough to take the form of a "Prospectus" before it vanished. The project, however, of "The Watchman" was actively carried into experiment; a weekly pamphlet of two sheets, "intended to supply at once the places of a Review, Newspaper, and Annual Register." He could persuade himself, notwithstanding his convicted impotence of will, his many procrastinations, and his horror of the bondage of working against time, that he should punctually by the week furnish forth a highly rectified preparation of fact, speculation, and fancy; an elixir which, as he might not unlikely have expressed it, should intellectually vitalize that portion of time.

Successful exertions of his friends to obtain subscribers in Bristol started him in good spirits on the tour among the midland great towns, so humorously narrated in his *Biographia Literaria*; and here additionally described in seven sprightly letters to his excellent friend, Mr. Wade.* Notwithstanding some snubs from vulgar ignorance, and the dry selfishness of trade, it was a gratifying career. Such a shining, dazzling, blazing display of eloquence had not as the newspapers say, when telling of extraordinary storms and floods, "been witnessed by the oldest inhabitant." Subscriptions came so thick and fast as to

* A part of one of them, however, is in effect of the darkest possible character, as relating his conversation with a very learned and scientific Atheist (a Dr. Darwin), who "boasted that he had never read one book in favour of such stuff" (the evidences of the existence of a God, and of revealed religion), "but that he had read all the works of Infidels."

raise his list to a thousand. Perhaps the admirers of his colloquial exhibitions really imagined that so much fine speculation expanded over a succession of mornings and long evenings, could and would be concentrated to a quintessence, that all this radiance would converge to a focus, in a matter of an hour's reading per week. A few weeks' experiment broke up the delusion on both sides. Each fourpenny patron complained that the thing had failed in just that particular quality which *he* had reckoned upon ; one alleged, probably with great truth, that "his boys did not improve much under it : " subscribers fell off rapidly ; many of them in too dignified a mood of displeasure to pay for what they had received ; and the Watchman closed at the tenth number ; with a loss on the adventure, which was borne, for the greater part, by Mr. Cottle, who had rendered the most assiduous services in the most disinterested spirit.

The addiction of so eloquent a man to the Socinian school raised a question (dubious on account of his notorious political opinions) of drawing him into its service in the pulpit. He would have had little inclination to so formal and ecclesiastical an office, separately from the necessity of some certain means of support. He was, however, induced to make an experiment ; and Mr. Cottle has given a vastly curious description (the humour of it mingled with regret) of his first two appearances, made in uncanonical guise, in a Socinian meeting-house in Bath. The first sermon proved to be no other than a lecture on the Corn Laws, which he had previously delivered in Bristol ; the second, addressed to an auditory of seventeen persons, men, women, and children (that is, to as many of them as did not fling open the pew doors and bolt before the conclusion), was a recapitulation of an old lecture in reprobation of the Hair Powder Tax. He did afterwards, in 1798, go on probation for the pastoral office at Shrewsbury ; but was happy to be rescued from the vocation by the intervention of Messrs. Wedgewood, proposing to settle on him an annuity of £150.

After finding that the world thought it could take care

of itself without a Watchman, he removed to a small house at Stowey, with the addition to his family of a son, and an amiable young literary friend of the name of Lloyd, who had solicited to become domesticated with him, and brought some addition to his scanty and precarious means. A gleam of happiness on this new abode—"wife, bratling, and self remarkably well;" neighbours intelligent, loved, and loving; even the muses disposed to renew their coquetry—proved only the morning of a darkening day. Dread of inevitable and remediless poverty is assigned by the biographer as the chief immediate cause of the prostration of spirit, described in several letters to himself. "A sort of calm hopelessness diffuses itself over my heart. Every mode of life which has promised me bread and cheese has been, one after another, torn away from me. But God remains." A reference, in the same letter, to Milton and epic poetry, betrayed that he was haunted by "lofty imaginings" (as he expresses it) of some high station which he might, perhaps, under auspicious circumstances, have attained in the same intellectual region. But if it be a correct inventory that he sets forth of the materials and apparatus, prerequisite to genius for going to work on an epic poem, he might have the consolation to his vanity that what he was not destined to accomplish never will be achieved by any other, to the end of time.

"I should not think of devoting less than twenty years to an Epic poem. Ten years to collect materials and warm my mind with universal science. I would be a tolerable mathematician. I would thoroughly understand mechanics, hydrostatics, optics and astronomy, botany, metallurgy, fossilism, chemistry, geology, anatomy, medicine, then the mind of man, then the minds of men, in all travels, voyages, and histories. So I would spend ten years; the next five in the composition of the poem; and the last five in the correction of it. So would I write; haply not unhearing of that divine and nightly-whispering voice, which speaks to mighty minds of predestinated garlands, starry and unwithering." *Ib.*, p. 192.

Not to notice the absurdity of supposing any mortal man thus to possess himself (in ten years too!) of all things in heaven and in earth, and under the earth, it may be surmised that if he *had* conquered this grand

totality, he would seek in vain for a subject that could avail itself of the cyclopædic accumulation; and also that his genius would be too much attenuated and absorbed among so chaotic a world of substances to issue forth, at the word of command, in one impetuous brilliant emanation. Many various substances may, certainly, be made collectively the materials for a great fire; but our poet's scheme, of taxing every element, looks like an ambitious anticipation, in figure, of that last fire which will take all things for its fuel, and flame from every thing.

By the way we may notice one deficiency of the poetic temperament in Coleridge. He seemed to feel no interest in the material monuments and vestiges of antiquity which can carry the mind back into a solemn and mysterious converse with ages and races of the earlier world. Mr. Cottle mentions that when once in York, and having occasion to go for some inquiry after a companion to the Minster, he did not care to enter, or look into, or apparently look at, the magnificent edifice. As a much more remarkable instance, it is recollected that, in a conversation which turned on his sojourn in Italy, he was asked about Pompeii; when to the surprise of the querist, he said that he had never been much interested by objects of that kind; the answer being given with a brevity and indifference which left it to be inferred (we know not whether correctly) that he had not taken the trouble to visit that most impressive scene. It may be doubted whether he would have been affected with an awful sentiment at sight of the stupendous structures which retain to the mind a kind of spectral presence of ancient Egypt.

Extracts of a correspondence with the biographer, during the residence at Stowey, make an amusing exposure of his toils and perplexities in the endeavour to do just the right thing in literary manufacture. It might bespeak the candour, but will we are afraid, be fully as likely to excite the ridicule, of ordinary readers, to see what mortal trouble there is in the adjustment of lines, words, and syllables; and to hear a powerful genius confessing, with

chagrin, that he had maintained "a hundred" hard conflicts to displace, and replace, a single refractory participle—and been beaten. No wonder that obstinate factions, and entrenched abuses, in the political state, should be so difficult to be overturned, when these sinners of syllables can defy the best efforts of the strongest hand for reform. If this seem going very far out of the way to force a parallel, we have only to say it is suggested by the references to the state of the nation which Coleridge himself intermixed with these exercitations of minute criticism. For example :

"Public affairs are in strange confusion. I am afraid that I shall prove, at least, as good a prophet as bard. O, doomed to fall, my country! enslaved and vile! But may God make me a foreboder of evil never to come." *Ib.*, p. 232.

Again :

"Oh! into what a state have the scoundrels brought this devoted kingdom. If the House of Commons would but melt down their faces, it would greatly assist the copper currency—we should have brass enough." p. 240.

The narrative, on to the time of his departure for Germany, is made up of anecdotes, little adventures, notes, and letters blending criticism and philosophy with witticisms, quips, and puns; the unprosperous commencement of Wordsworth's literary career; and quarrels among poetical and therefore irritable (?) friends. From a casual mention of the notorious Rev. Sir Herbert Croft, so unfortunately admitted by Dr. Johnson as his substitute for writing about Young in the *Lives of the Poets*, Mr. Coleridge takes occasion to relate the obtrusive proceeding of that clerical charlatan in the affair of Chatterton's Poems, and his base conduct to that extraordinary, ill-principled, and ill-fated literary adventurer's family. There is the pleasant incident of Coleridge's falling in with a woman who asked if he knew one Coleridge; on his replying that he had heard of such person, she showered every abuse within the compass of her vocabulary on "that vile Jacobin villain," for having corrupted and wiled away a young man of

her parish, of the name of Burnet. He so "won her heart," he says, by his manner of listening, and exclaiming "dear me," that his good nature made him forego the pleasure of creating a fine dramatic surprise by telling her that he was the man.

Though it be a curious and amusing, it is a disconsolate review, of the history up to this period (of his going to Germany). A man of such rare talents and accomplishments, in the energy of youth, with the well-spring in his soul of all vigorous and aspiring thoughts, thrown on the world (by himself, as he said,) for a course perfectly erratic; without destination, without friends but by accident, or any but the most precarious means of support, till the annuity from the Wedgewoods; his imagination bewitched into a scheme in all ways and degrees Utopian: a most imprudent marriage—imprudent, we mean, on any consideration of pecuniary competence; the habits of a "chartered libertine" from every thing like method, regularity, and punctuality; a fertility of transitory projects, rising like bubbles through a disturbed fluid, to break and vanish into the atmosphere; irksome shifts to get over the month or the week; changes of residence; the tenor of life broken by excursions, jaunts of amusement, ramblings and wanderings with no sufficient object, and apparently prompted very much by pure restlessness; sudden starts away, at the slightest touch of accident, from employments or engagements; diminutive occasional compositions sought out and gathered, with an impatient task-work for making up their deficiency of quantity to fill a small volume, as a temporary resource; and all this while the undefined idea of something great and extraordinary in possibility, and an indignant feeling against adverse fate, with no great severity of reflection, as it would seem, on his own defects as partly, at least, the real evil under which he was suffering.

At the same time, it is but just to observe, that it is not so easy to say *what* he should or might have done, as to reproach him for the faults which went so far to frustrate his good intentions. But let us suppose him,

by the time that the American fantasy had gone off, coming to a resolute stand ; compelling himself to a deliberate consideration of what was practicable and eligible, for his talents and in his circumstances ; determined to concentrate the whole force of his mind on a selected object ; denying himself that social dissipation in which he squandered his mental wealth and his time ; peremptory with himself to forego the vanity of temporary display, for the production of what should be a permanent honour ; carefully economising the means, though narrow, which the respect and admiration of such a man, so employed, would not have suffered to fail him, while in a progress toward public patronage—suppose thus much ; and he might have raised on this tract of his time some substantial and elaborated monument of his genius, instead of leaving it, as now beheld, a comparatively desolate scene of small operations and abortive plans ; showing, indeed, that a capable power has been there, but too desultory and vagrant to do itself justice.

From the period of Coleridge's departure for Germany, toward the end of 1798, to the close of our author's communications with him in 1815, he comes in view only at intervals. The plan of the work being cast to comprise notices of other individuals, of whom Southey is conspicuous, we have several sprightly and satirical letters to Mr. Cottle from him at Lisbon ; descriptive of manners ; of a filth which beats hollow that of the Yahoos ; and of a superstition, which might raise a question in what sense reason is an *essential* property of human nature.

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The acquaintance commenced with Mr. (afterwards Sir Humphrey) Davy might be regarded as one of the red-letter days in the record of Coleridge's life ; since he has somewhere said, at some late date if we remember, that he had never known but two great men, Wordsworth and Davy ; an exclusion pronounced on the strength of some rather fanciful canon, we should think, considering how many distinguished men he had known, less or more. Mr. Cottle, who had the gratification of introducing

them to each other, mentions a perilous hazard that Davy's splendid course had never been run. In what may be denominated the desperate enthusiasm of science, he inhaled, deliberately and progressively, such a quantity, in the way of experiment, of one of the noxious gases, that his life was within a trifle of being extinguished.

* * * *

To Mr. Davy and our author he told the curious story of his having, when a Cambridge collegian, and in consequence of a young woman's rejection of his addresses, run away to enlist as a soldier, under the name of Silas Tomken Cumberbatch. In the most perfect character of farce the tale relates his tumbling feats of horsemanship; the jokes of his comrades on his incorrigible aptitude in that way; his transfer to the office of attending the sick; his manner of amusing them and the convalescents by the recital of facts of ancient history, some of which they believed and admired, some of which they discredited and laughed at. The oddest occurrence in the whole affair is thus related:—

“He had been placed as a sentinel at the door of a ball-room, or some public place of resort, when two of his officers, passing in, stopped for a moment, near Mr. Coleridge, talking about Euripides, two lines from whom one of them repeated. At the sound of Greek the sentinel instinctively turned his ear, when he said, with all deference, touching his lofty cap, ‘I hope your honour will excuse me, but the lines you have repeated are not quite accurately cited; these are the lines,’ when he gave them in their more correct form. ‘Besides,’ said Mr. Coleridge, ‘instead of being in Euripides, the lines will be found in the second antistrophe of the *Œdipus* of Sophocles.’ ‘Why, who the d— are you?’ said the officer, ‘old Faustus ground young again?’ ‘I am only your honour’s humble sentinel,’ said Mr. Coleridge, again touching his cap.” —*Ib.* p. 57.

He appears to have been regarded with great good humour by his comrades, who took him for a queer compound of booby and conjuror. How he was treated by his friends when they traced him out and restored him to his college, is not told; but it would not be an unlikely surmise that this enlistment vagary might have been one cause among others of the alienation of his family.

We do not find the exact dates and duration of his residence in Malta, whither he went for his health, being previously acquainted with the Judge, and became secretary to Sir Alexander Ball ; or of his subsequent adventures in Italy. The relation of them belongs to the office of the authorized biographers. But why did he not write a narrative of them himself? We remember to have heard that for a work so comparatively easy, one would think, he was offered a very large sum by the booksellers. And he wanted money; for Mr. Cottle says he had expended by the time he reached England all he had received for his secretaryship.

One of the most remarkable things he had to tell of was, his critical escape from Italy, upon a friendly and cogent warning personally given him by Jerome Bonaparte. He made his way to Leghorn, under a continual alarm of being tracked or interrupted by the keen vigilance of the French police ; and was there almost in despair, when accidentally, while indulging his melancholy foreboding among some ruins in the neighbourhood, he fell in with an American captain, who became so interested for him that he undertook and accomplished his deliverance. When he eagerly enquired by *what means*, as soon as the ship had cleared the port, the captain was very grave in answering, that it was by *swearing*, before the local authorities, that the young man was his steward, a native American, whose parents he intimately knew. He had clothed him in character, and given him a basket of vegetables to carry after him to the ship.

After an absence of a number of years, he was again in Bristol, in miserable health, the chief cause of which Mr. Cottle had not suspected, even in reading such a description as the following, in a letter which preceded him :—

“ You will find me the wretched wreck of what you knew me, rolling rudderless. My health is extremely bad. Pain I have enough of, but that is indeed to me a mere trifle ; but the increasing, overpowering sensations of wretchedness ; achings in my limbs, with an indescribable restlessness, that makes action, to any available purpose, almost impossible ; and, worst of all, the sense of blighted utility, regrets, not remorseless. But enough ; yea, more than enough, if these things pro-

duce or deepen the conviction of the utter powerlessness of ourselves, and that we either perish, or find aid from something that passes understanding.—Ib. p. 75.

In aggravation of all this he had cause to apprehend a cessation or great diminution of his annuity from the Wedgewoods, and it was eventually reduced to £75; the whole £150 being found too onerous a tax for the wealth of Etruria to bear; "so that," writes Coleridge to Mr. Wade, in dread of the entire loss, "at my age, I am to be penniless, resourceless, in heavy debt, my health and spirits absolutely broken down, and with scarce a friend in the world." Just at this time young Mr. De Quincey, very slightly acquainted with Coleridge, *solicited* Mr. Cottle to be the medium of conveying to him a present of *more* than £300, but positively insisted it should not be less; and the benefactor not to be named. In receiving this generous donation, Coleridge tried to save his pride by affecting to accept it as a *loan*; so convinced as he must have been, on the ground of both the receiver's ability and the giver's intention, that repayment was out of the question.

Soon afterwards he removed far from our author's knowledge; residing partly in Westmoreland; so that another seven years elapsed before he returned, in 1814, to Bristol, on an engagement to lecture on Shakspeare. That same poet would, in his time, have been somewhat more punctual to any appointment *he* had made. The engagement was expressly for a certain day, against which every arrangement and announcement was industriously made for assembling an auditory. Coleridge took his journey from London accordingly; but having discovered that a lady in the coach was sister to a friend of his in North Wales, whither she was going, he came to the conviction, by the time the coach came to Bath, that it was his duty to accompany her all the way, and see her safely set down at her brother's door. He did so; and left the good people of Bristol to make the best of their own judgment of Hamlet till several days after.

From this point of time to that which closes our author's series of documents and recollections, marked

by the date of March, 1815, the history darkens to the greatest melancholy; a gloom indeed so profound, that but for the alleviation of an assurance that he recovered to a better and happier state in the latter years of his life, every reader of benevolent sensibility would retire from the contemplation of such a ruined magnificence of mind with an oppressive sadness. It was on an occasion in this last visit of Coleridge to Bristol, that his friend was surprised and shocked by being suddenly made aware of the dreadful habit which he acknowledges, in the following passage, to have been evident to others long before the occasion alluded to, which startled him with the discovery.

"I received information" [it was after he had his own evidence] "that Mr. Coleridge had been long, very long, in the habit of taking from two quarts of laudanum a week, to a pint a day; and on one occasion he had been known to take, in the twenty-four hours, a whole quart of laudanum! This exceeds the quantity which Psalmanazar ever took, or any of the race of opium consumers on record. The serious expenditure of money, resulting from this habit, was the least evil, though very great, and which must have absorbed all the produce of his lectures, and all the liberalities of his friends."—*Ib.* p. 169.

While entertained for many months in the house of his generous friend, Mr. Wade, with every possible attention to his accommodation, he consented, willingly in appearance, to put himself under medical superintendence; and even to be accompanied or followed in his walks by a man employed, in substitution for his own impotent will, to prevent his access to the places where he could obtain "the accursed drug;" for so he named it with emphatic feeling; in similar plight to what may be read in legends of *diablerie*, of some spell-bound captive to an object at once fascinating and detested. But he had the advantage of genius for doing himself mischief. And perhaps he might even be somewhat gratified at the conscious dexterity of his manœuvres (one of which is here related) to baffle his guard. Yet, under the combined pressure of self-reproach, a broken constitution, dishonoured character, disablement for literary exertion, and the exhaustion of pecuniary resources, he was driven to think of a refuge, and requested his friends

to consult about the means of admission into a receptacle for the insane, to be under the coercion of a will possessing the authority which his own had lost. "The impression was fixed on his mind, that he should inevitably die unless he were placed under constraint, and that constraint he thought could alone be effected in an asylum."

As to the constant grievance of an empty purse and accumulating debt, which humbled him, a little time afterwards, to the project of offering himself for a daily teacher of boys and youths, to be received by him in "a cheap lodging," Mr. Cottle is constrained to say it *must* have been chiefly owing to the opium expenditure; supplying him with money was proved to be worse than useless; and it became a matter of conscience with his faithful old friend to discontinue his profitless liberalities, after a last gratuitous remittance to him when living in a friend's house at Calne, in March, 1815. He returned no more to Bristol; removed to London or its neighbourhood; and became finally a stranger to the biographer. We think it did not look well that, to a friend so warmly and faithfully attached, so solicitous for his welfare and honour, so ready to assist him in difficulty and misfortune, so indulgent to his failings, and who would have been so delighted to receive from himself any information of the attainment at length of a state the reverse of that which had been so long witnessed and deplored, he never wrote again. The long subsequent stage of his life, to the end, remains to be described by the gentlemen who had the happiness of an intimate acquaintance with him during the period of recovered virtue, emancipated mental energy, and religious peace.

No adequate idea can be formed of the condition in which the present work leaves him, without the lurid light thrown on it by several letters, which we can well believe that nothing would have determined Mr. Cottle to publish but a strong conviction of the duty of rendering the memorial of so remarkable a man salutary, as an impressive warning. The pain he had felt in so deciding was somewhat relieved, and his assurance of having

done right confirmed, when the following letter, written to Mr. Wade, came into his hands, after he had proceeded far on his work.

“*Bristol, June, 26th, 1814.*”

“Dear Sir,

“For I am unworthy to call any good man friend—much less you, whose hospitality and love I have abused; accept, however, my entreaties for your forgiveness, and for your prayers.

“Conceive a poor miserable wretch, who for many years has been attempting to beat off pain, by a constant recurrence to the vice that reproduces it. Conceive a spirit in hell, employed in tracing out for others the road to that heaven, from which his crimes exclude him! In short, conceive whatever is most wretched, helpless, and hopeless, and you will form as tolerable a notion of my state, as it is possible for a good man to have.

“I used to think the text in St. James that, ‘he who offended in one point, offends in all,’ very harsh; but I now feel the awful, the tremendous truth of it. In the one crime of *OPIMUM*, what crime have I not made myself guilty of!—Ingratitude to my Maker! and to my benefactors—injustice! and *unnatural cruelty to my poor children!*—self-contempt for my repeated promise-breach, nay, too often, actual falsehood!

“After my death, I earnestly entreat, that a full and unqualified narration of my wretchedness, and of its guilty cause, may be made public, that, at least, some little good may be effected by the direful example!

“May God Almighty bless you, and have mercy on your still affectionate and, in his heart, grateful—

“S. T. COLERIDGE.”

Ib. pp. 185—187.

It cannot be known whether the writer, supposing him, toward the end of his life, to remember the purport of this letter, would, on being questioned, have persisted in the wish and the injunction it expresses. But Mr. Cottle deems himself justified in assuming that his matured benevolence and piety could not have made him less willing that his unhappy example should stand conspicuous to warn others back from the vortex.

That the letter was not written in a transient mood of grief and exaggerated self-abasement, in a momentary disturbance or lapse of his reason, may be assumed from the bitter sensations of conscience betrayed here and there in preceding communications; and from the deliberate surrender of himself to justice in two letters to the biographer, of a date somewhat earlier than this to Mr.

Wade; the one in answer to a faithful solemn remonstrance, the other to a second letter of more consolatory character. A part of the first will complete the spectacle of the loftiest humanity laid prostrate, a powerful, capacious, aspiring mind, bound down to hopeless slavery and anguish, by one disastrous habit.

“April 26, 1814.

“You have poured oil in the raw and festering wound of an old friend's conscience, Cottle! but it is *oil of vitriol*! I but barely glanced at the middle of the first page of your letter, and have seen no more of it—not from resentment (God forbid), but from the state of my bodily and mental sufferings, that scarcely permitted human fortitude to let in a new visitor of affliction.

“The object of my present reply, is, to state the case, just as it is—first, that for ten years the anguish of my spirit has been indescribable, the sense of my danger staring, but the consciousness of my guilt worse—far worse than all! I have prayed, with drops of anguish on my brow; trembling, not only before the justice of my Maker, but even before the mercy of my Redeemer.—‘I gave thee so many talents, what hast thou done with them?’ Secondly—overwhelmed as I am, with a sense of my direful infirmity, I have never attempted to disguise or conceal the cause. On the contrary, not only to friends, have I stated the whole case with tears, and the very bitterness of shame; but in two instances, I have warned young men, mere acquaintances, who had spoken of having taken laudanum, of the direful consequences, by an awful exposition of its tremendous effects on myself.

“Thirdly, though before God I cannot lift up my eyelids, and only do not despair of his mercy, because to despair would be adding crime to crime, yet to my fellow-men, I may say, that I was seduced into the accursed habit ignorantly. I had been almost bed-ridden for many months, with swellings in my knees. In a medical Journal, I unhappily met with an account of a cure performed in a similar case (or what appeared to me so), by rubbing in of laudanum, at the same time taking a given dose internally. It acted like a charm, like a miracle! I recovered the use of my limbs, of my appetite, of my spirits, and this continued for near a fortnight. At length the unusual stimulus subsided, the complaint returned,—the supposed remedy was recurred to—but I cannot go through the dreary history.

“O God! how willingly would I place myself under Dr. Fox, in his establishment; for my case is a species of madness, only that it is a derangement, an utter impotence of the volition, and not of the intellectual faculties. You bid me rouse myself: go bid a man paralytic in both arms, to rub them briskly together, and that will cure him. ‘Alas!’ he would reply, ‘that I cannot move my arms, is my complaint and my misery.’

“May God bless you, and your affectionate, but most afflicted,

“S. T. COLERIDGE.”

lb. pp. 155—158.

The second short letter was in answer to his friend's entreaty to be pardoned if he had seemed too severe in his remonstrance.

"O dear friend! I have too much to be forgiven to feel any difficulty in forgiving the cruellest enemy that ever trampled on me: and you I have only to *thank*! You have no conception of the dreadful hell of my mind, and conscience, and body. You bid me pray. Oh, I do pray inwardly to be able to pray; but indeed to pray, to pray with a faith to which a blessing is promised, this is the reward of faith, this is the gift of God to the elect! Oh! if to feel how infinitely worthless I am, how poor a wretch, with just free-will enough to be deserving of wrath, and of my own contempt, and of none to merit a moment's peace, can make a part of a Christian's creed; so far I am a Christian." *Ib.* pp. 160, 161.

It will be a most cordial gratification to see, we hope not long hence, an accurate statement of the manner, the progressive degrees, the accompanying feelings, the calm of conscience brightening into a temperate happiness, of his ascent from the depths of his long sojourn in so baleful a region, to the delightful ground of liberty, exemplary piety, and Christian hope.

* * * * *

Coleridge's religious opinions are interspersed or interwoven through a wide extent of all sorts of subjects and speculations. They would require to be collected into order, if that were a practicable undertaking, from his *Biographia Literaria*, *Friend*, *Lay Sermons*, *Constitution of the Church and State*, *Aids to Reflection*, *Table Talk*, and *Literary Remains*. We are not aware of Mr. Cottle's authority for expecting, apparently with confidence, "a great Posthumous Work, to elucidate and establish the everlasting principles of Christian truth, and to exhibit a System of Christian Ethics." It should be, of course the work announced in the *Aids to Reflection*, as "having been," the author says, "the principal labour of my life since manhood, and which I am now [in 1825] preparing for the press, under the title, *Assertion of Religion*, as necessarily *involving* Revelation; and of Christianity, as the only Revelation of permanent and universal validity." If the work should actually appear, it will be a signally remarkable and memorable phenomenon, as combining a far greater variety of properties,

and what may be called colours, than any other of the class. It will be learned, historical, philosophical, metaphysical, scholastical,* subtle, profound, fanciful, mystical, poetical in illustration, and strongly tinctured with the phraseology unfortunately acquired from the German academics. The work cannot fail to contain much that will be valuable; but still, as to the truth and authority of the Christian religion, we are tempted to ask what new lights can be shed, what more valid arguments remain to be produced, what quietus of controversy, what fiery element for blasting the fallacies of scepticism?

* * * * *

But another work was repeatedly announced by him as on the point of coming into the light, under the title of *Elements of Discourse*, purporting to be something like a new system of logic. And here again, whatever new arrangements, whatever transfers or partitions of provinces, a revolutionary hand may impose on logic as a technical science, we may be permitted to doubt whether any great *practical* improvement can be brought to the economy of thinking, after we have been so long familiarly in the company of the most effective thinkers that ever lived, or that human nature is capable of producing. Nor, with all our respect for intellectual endowments so eminently extraordinary, can we rid ourselves of the impression that our logical reformer's own example is far from affording an auspicious omen.

There may be those who, from patient attention, great effort, and unusual mental strength in making that effort, have the consciousness of a satisfactory understanding of the tenor of his speculations. They could perhaps give them back, point by point, in language of their own. But assuredly a very great proportion of his readers, of at

* Coleridge is remembered to have said that he had read *all* Thomas Aquinas; a most enormous hyperbole, of course. Apart from the formidable array of that miraculous Doctor's other writings, let any one look at or into the gigantic volume of the *Summa Theologia*, built up of myriads of logical ingenuities, conflicting arguments, distinctions real and unreal, on all things in existence, in possibility, and in neither the one nor the other. Coleridge added, that he could give a general view of the speculations of the schoolmen. But this he might do from Brucker.

least moderate and not unexercised intellect, find themselves grievously at a loss in parts, and unsuccessful on the whole. There has, indeed, been no little affectation in the matter. Not a few, aware of the writer's great fame, unwilling to seem deficient in capacity, and perhaps really admiring particular parts of his works, have concealed their consciousness of being often baffled in the study, under a dissembling show of applause, while they would have shrunk from the test of having to state the exact import of what they had read.

For one thing, it is quite obvious that Coleridge, after setting before his readers the theme, the *one* theme apparently, undertaken to be elucidated, could not, or would not, proceed in a straight forward course of explanation, argument, and appropriate illustration from fancy; keeping in sight before him a certain ultimate object; and placing marks, as it were, of the steps and stages of the progress. He takes up a topic which we much desire to see examined, a question which we should be glad to see disposed of, and begins with good promise in preparatory observations; but, after a short advance, the train of discussion appears to lose or abandon its direction; veers off arbitrarily, or at the call of accident; complicates what should be the immediate question with secondary, relative, or even quite foreign matters; arrests itself, perhaps, in a philological dissertation on a particular term that comes in the way; resumes, nominally, at an interval, the leading purpose; but with a ready propensity to stray again into any collateral track, and thence into the next, and the next; till at last we come out as from an enchanted wood; hardly knowing whither, and certainly not knowing how to retrace the mazy course; having seen, it is true, divers remarkable objects, and glimpses to a distance on either hand; but not having obtained the one thing which we imagined we were conducted to pursue. When we have asked ourselves, Now what is the result, as to the purpose we started with in such excellent company? we could not tell.

We have sometimes felt as if our instructor were playing the necromancer with us; causing shapes of intelli-

gence to come before us as if ready to reveal the secrets we were inquiring about; but making them vanish when they were opening the semblance of a mouth; again bringing them or others, grave and bearded, or of more pleasant visage; and when they are getting into hopeful utterance, presto, they are gone. Or perchance, if sometimes permitted to say on, it may happen that they emit such an oracle that we are in danger of muttering, after a pause, "There needed no ghost to tell us that."

Another too evident characteristic of his writing is what we may denominate an *arbitrary abstruseness*. No doubt, the extreme subtlety and abstraction of his speculation at one time, and its far reach at another,—the recondite principles and remote views in which he delighted to contemplate a subject—must necessarily and inevitably throw somewhat of a character of obscurity, indistinctness, shall we say *unreality*, over his intellectual creations, as looked upon by minds of but moderate perspicacity and discipline. But still, we think he might have forced them up, if we may so express it, into a more palpable form; might have presented them more in relief and nearer to the eye; so that their substances, figure, junctures, transitions, should have been more distinct, more *real* to the reader's perception. Instead of being content to trace out and note the mental process just as he performed it *for himself*, in his own peculiar manner, and requiring to be understood on his own conditions (the *whole* of the accommodation and adaptation for understanding him being on the part and at the cost of the student, who was to be despised if he failed) he might at least have met the student half way, by working his thoughts into a cast more like the accustomed manner of shaping and expressing ideas among thinking men. When the reader thinks he has mastered the full meaning of a section or paragraph, he feels confident that the portion of thought *might* be put in a more perspicuous form, without injury to even a refinement in any part of its consistence; and that it would have been so in the hands of Hume, for example, or Stewart. But Coleridge seems resolute to carry on his process at the greatest distance from the neighbourhood of common thinking. Or if the

plain nature of the subject compels him to perform it nearer at hand, he must, lest any thing should be vulgarly tangible, make every substance under operation fly off in gas.

Not a little of the obscurity complained of may be owing to the strange dialect which he fabricated for himself, partly of his own invention, and partly from the German terminology; which never will or can be naturalized in English literature, whatever efforts are making, or to be made, to deprave our language with it—an impossibility at which, as plain Englishmen, we sincerely rejoice. If the *greater part* of the philosophy, for which it was constructed as the vehicle, shall keep its distance too, so much the better. That inseparable vehicle itself will debar it (and Coleridge is a proof) from all chance of extensive acceptance.

Notwithstanding all these animadversions, it were little better than an impertinence to say that his writings (we make no reference to the beauties of his poetry) contain, though unfortunately in such a scattered miscellaneous disorder, very much that is admirable and valuable. There are acute and just discriminations, profound reflections, sagacious conjectures, and felicitous images, without number. In portions and passages no professed disciple can admire him more than we do.

* * * * *

It is cause for great regret, that a mind so powerful, original, and amply furnished, should have been withheld, by a combination of causes, including those of which we have attempted a slight indication, from taking that primary rank in philosophy and literature, for which nature seemed to have designed it. We have not the means to know what may have been the effect and extent of his influence in the secondary mode, of his personal communications with many able men. But as regarded solely in the capacity of an author, he is (hitherto) one of the most remarkable instances in history, of the disproportion between splendid talents and success, in the ordinary sense of success, with the cultivated portion of the public.

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[September, 1810.]

The Ramayuna of Valmeeki, translated from the Sungkrit, with explanatory Notes. By WILLIAM CAREY and JOSHUA MARSHMAN. Vol. I. containing the first Book. 8vo.

SCARCELY so much as a third part of a century has passed away, since a large proportion of the wise men of us here in Europe were found looking, with a devout and almost trembling reverence, towards the awful mysteries of Sanscrit literature. The idea which had taken possession of our imagination, was that of a most solemn temple, placed far within the shades of a grove of unmeasured extent and unknown antiquity, in the solitude and twilight of which now and then a daring adventurer had descried at a distance, and contemplated with religious emotion, though but obscurely and partially disclosed to his view, some of its stupendous proportions and columns: while it was doubtfully reported that some one or two still more hardy intruders into those shades, had ventured into the immediate precincts, had even presumed within the threshold, and glanced into the awful gloom of the interior. It was not pretended to be known how long this one or more pretended aspirants had dared to continue there, nor what they had been permitted with impunity to behold; and it may for ever remain equally unknown whether it was from what they had the temerity to reveal, or whether it was by any other communication, that it had come to be understood among us, that the presence of something divine was perceptible in that dread mansion; and that oracles of a deeper philosophy and a sublimer theology than had ever been vouchsafed in explanation of matter and spirit, of creatures and creators, in our part of the world, there disclosed the very last abstraction of truth; that there were heard such strains of celestial poetry as

would put our inspired or uninspired bards to silence ; and that a tablet of authentic history might there be seen which would unfold to us a retrospect of enormous periods of human existence and agency, anterior to the little modern story about Adam and Eve, and satisfy us that our eras Domini and Mundi measure time on a scale fit enough, perhaps, for the chronicling of wine and strong beer. As to the infinity of idols, not denied to be the occupants of that awful fane, the language of contrast and solemnity but very slightly modified its tone. It was assumed that the measure of our liberality in religion ought to be estimated according to our willingness to admit a variety of claims to divine honours, especially in favour of gods who had splendid religious establishments among an enlightened and happy people (as they were asserted to have been), in an age when we were little better than naked wild beasts, roaming in the woods. The persons making this representation did, besides, very justly guess, that in proportion to our disregard of the one exclusive object of religious homage would be our capacity of admitting and worshipping a million. Our liberality proved not to have been overrated ; we were found capable of entertaining the representations which demanded its exercise towards the countless legion of oriental gods : philosophers and scholars conceded to their claims, poets began the direct formalities of worship by writing hymns to them : even ministers of "*our*" religion spoke of them in reverential terms ; and our Christian government has given a most marked attention to the encouragement of their worship in the East.

Some of the earlier of these religious demonstrations were at least premature ; as being made previously to the authenticated disclosure of any part of what was enshrined within the holy language, and even while it seemed yet doubtful whether we were not doomed all to die without the benefit of that revelation. We had heard of Vedas and Puranas, and perhaps of Menu, and Vyasa, and Valmic ; and there was no form of reverential sentiment within the "reaches of our souls,"

which we had not associated with these terms and names; but it had been preferable not to have heard of them at all, and not to have associated these sentiments with them, than to be continually reminded by them of the impenetrable darkness which veiled from us those treasures of wisdom, the possession of which, could they be imparted to us, would deliver us from that painful sense of limited faculties and scanty knowledge, under which we have hitherto been left to suffer, by the feeble light of the Bible, of all moral science and literature, and of the Grecian and Roman philosophy and poetry, even notwithstanding the advantageous circumstance of their being pagan.

When at length some hope began to arise, that in part the disclosure would soon be made, the eagerness and the seriousness of expectation were not less than would be felt by a man that should have been brought up and confined from his infancy in an apartment which admitted no direct light from the sky, and should at last be assured that to-morrow morning he should be taken out to see the sun rise.

At length the appointed and auspicious hour arrived; and the Geeta appeared on our horizon as the morning-star. In a moment, and in the act of awkwardly imitating Brahminical gestures, we fell prostrate. But retaining some small remainder of the curiosity and courage characteristic of Englishmen, we presumed, even in this devout posture, to gaze. The effect was very rueful and very comical. For, after gazing a short time, many of the worshippers began to suspect that, if we may be permitted to use a very low word in connexion with what should have been a very high subject, they had been *humbugged*; and that what had been announced to them as the celestial precursor of a grand luminary, might perchance prove to be no other than the fire of a sort of sacred brick-kiln, kindled for the purpose of giving an apotheosis to divers lumps and shapes of clay, which would soon demand a still more prostrate obeisance of these devotees.—In plain terms, when those pretenders to superior reason and intellectual

freedom,—who had with notable prudence given out that there was cause to believe a more refined wisdom and a more enchanting eloquence are inscribed in the ancient volumes of the Brahminical sanctuary, than any thing that ever emanated from the strongest minds of Europe, or has been displayed in the Jewish and Christian revelations,—obtained at last a translation, by a scholar whose ability and accuracy no one could venture to question, of what was confessedly the most revered part of one of the most revered works in that sanctuary, they were grievously confounded. And not small was the mortification of those who had suffered themselves to admit in any degree, the possible truth of such a representation; while those, who had always despised the fiction, had now the opportunity of kindly soothing the vexation of its propagators and believers, by requesting their assistance for the more devout and profitable contemplation of the new light, the vision of the true theology and philosophy, the thunder and lightnings of ardent and sublime poetry. Perhaps a very few attempted to protect themselves by a manful effort of effrontery, stoutly asserting that there *was* a profound philosophy, and what not, discoverable in the production. But the half dozen (if there were so many, fools or hypocrites for Crishna's sake) could hardly obtain notice enough to be even despised, amidst the general and irresistible conviction, that, however thick the darkness in which we may have been left, by the writings of prophets and apostles, or (still more unaccountably and haplessly) by the greatest efforts of uninspired genius, it is not to the Sanscrit literature we are any longer to look for the intellectual day-spring,—if the poor tenebrious glimmer of the Geeta be a fair specimen of the Indian lights. For, readers of the most ordinary sense, and even had they been so devoutly prepossessed with the sanctity of the book, as to perform ablutions, and chaunt a litany in plain grammatical English to the Hindoo Triad, before presuming to open it, were soon forced to perceive, that it bore no one trace of what we in Europe can acknowledge as a strong philosophic mind; that the

writer was incapable of elucidating any one thing in heaven or earth ; that moon-light in a November fog is too flattering a comparison ; that what purports to be of the nature of philosophy and theology is for the most part an utterly inane mysticism, where the reader, while trying hard to make it palpable to his thinking faculty, finds every moment the dim incipient shapes of thought, which seem attempting to rise in his mind, dissipated in perfect vacancy, except where sometimes this mysticism comes to an intelligible notion, in the form of a bouncing absurdity or despicable puerility ; that the whole exhibition seems to be an attempt to amalgamate the lowest fooleries of superstition, with certain abstract principles of what is called natural thology, most feebly and remittingly apprehended ; that the supreme rule of morality is to annihilate the motives to action ; and finally, that what is to be taken for the poetical beauty of the work, consists in exactly those qualities which could not have entered into the composition, but through the writers being destitute of a firm and disciplined intellect.

But lest there should have remained a possibility, after the importation of this sample, that the distressed philosophic inquirers of Europe should still indulge some lingering hope of obtaining, from the sacred literature of India, the theological and moral illumination vainly sought from the Bible,—and so should be losing the precious time in which deputations might be sent to try to acquire it from the sages of Caffraria, New Zealand, or the Copper Mine River,—further translations soon were to be made from the cyclopædia of the gods. It was impossible for Sir William Jones to be long in India, without contriving to get into their library, by means natural or magical, by an entrance terrene, aerial, or subterraneous. He got in accordingly, and through connivance of one of their priests, who “requested most earnestly that his name might be concealed,” stole nothing less than the *Dherma Sastra*, the Institutes of Menu ; which not long after, in an English shape, arrived on our shores. And now or never was the chance of ascending into the sky of wisdom, by

means of the Brahminical Jacob's-ladder. For here we might learn about the divine egg, which Brahma came out of, splitting it in halves, the one of which became the heavens, and the other the earth; how the said Brahma alternately works and takes a nap, the one in what is accounted his day, and the other in his night, each of them comprising the space of several thousand millions of our years; how men, of four distinct orders, sprang from four localities of his person; and how he contrived a much more singular mode of origination for a superior and second-rate divine sort of beings, one of the foremost of whom was Menu, who pretends to have taken on himself no little of the business of the creation. In this sacred volume might be seen the full evidence of the more than half divine qualities, powers, and prerogatives, innate in one class of human creatures, and of the essential unchangeable vileness of another; together with the thousands of divinely authorized regulations, according to which the former are even bound in duty to trample on the latter. This venerable document might help to purify our standard of excellence, by celebrating, as of the highest religious merit, a multitude of things compatible with the greatest moral depravity. There the benefit and delight of worshipping an innumerable crew of gods, might be seen, in a ritual inexpressibly silly except where filthy or cruel, and not to be matched for complex multiplicity by all the tracks of noxious and loathsome reptiles at this hour crawling and wriggling in the purlieus of all the pagodas in Hindostan. It could not but be a very dignified and philosophic thing, to prefer the thousand-fold ceremonial about eating rice, to the Christian morality; and to wish the commutation of rational repentance, for propitiatory exercises in cow-dung. And our inquisitiveness concerning a future state, which could find so little for rational belief or sublime and awful speculation in the Christian views of another life, might satisfy its utmost demands for evidence and magnificence now at last, on obtaining a revelation which promises to the eminently good, (that is, those that have been the most obstinate in

useless austerities), a final beatific absorption amounting to an extinction of individual consciousness: and predicting to the rest a long succession of births, in the course of which the souls of the wicked have a chance of finding themselves lodged in the forms of all sorts of reptiles and vermin, and even of sprouting in weeds from the dunghill.

The admirable translator seemed to labour under a considerable, and in some degree ludicrous, perplexity, whereabouts, on the scale of wisdom and sanctity, to fix the place of the Indian demi-god, prophet, and lawgiver. He had gone to the East with an imagination on fire at the idea of those intellectual wonders, which even he, surpassingly illuminated as he was, had to a certain extent suffered himself to believe the Sanscrit had guarded within its mysterious recesses for so many centuries, to be revealed to a happier age. As soon as he dared to hope those recesses might not be impregnable to his own literary ardour, he felt much of the spirit of the knight-errant, going to rescue the fair princess, Truth, from the durance of an unknown language. In the very reasonable exultation of finding himself at last the master of this language, and thus admitted at once into a world combining perfect novelty with extreme antiquity; thus introduced into a region peopled with sages, to whom so many delusive associations of thought had conspired to give an appearance of almost super-human venerableness; and thus finding a perfectly new track for ascending far towards the primeval periods of the world,—it is not, perhaps, to be accounted strange, that he could not view with altogether undazzled eyes the work which suddenly unfolded to himself, and by which he was suddenly unfolding to the European world, the whole frame of a system which had been the object of ineffectual curiosity and vain conjecture and fable ever since the time of Alexander. And therefore, while it was impossible for his dignified understanding not to see that he had got into his hands the very quintessence of all manner of absurdity, and impossible for his ingenuousness not to

avow this perception in very pointed terms, he yet appeared somewhat reluctant to acknowledge, even to himself, that the system celebrated for thousands of years, as something almost too awful to be profaned by investigation, was absolutely nothing but a compost of whatever was most despicable, and whatever was most hateful, in paganism. It might well be supposed, therefore, that his honest acknowledgment of the futility of the metaphysical conceits, of the monstrous priestcraft, of the ceremonial silliness, of the partially bad morality, and of several other reprobate qualities manifest in the work, was not made without some reluctance and mortification. And this presumption is verified by his evident anxiety to show, as a set-off, certain other qualities alleged to be prominently distinguishable in the Institutes, and which nothing but an imagination, not yet effectually cured of the oriental fever, could have allowed to be described in such terms as the following:—"nevertheless, a spirit of sublime devotion," [devotion to what?] "of benevolence to mankind," [when a very large proportion of the work, probably much more than half, is employed, directly or indirectly, in adjusting and fixing, in a complete system, the unparalleled iniquity of the distinction of *castes*, and the most arrogant and oppressive claims of the Brahmins!] "and of amiable tenderness to all sentient creatures, pervades the whole work: the style of it has a certain austere majesty, that sounds like the language of legislation, and extorts a respectful awe; the sentiments of independence on all beings but God, and the harsh admonitions, even to kings, are truly noble." Preface, p. xv. Perhaps it had been as well for this incomparable scholar and estimable man, to have imitated, on this occasion, the prudence of the first invader of Sanscrit, Mr. Wilkins, who, in his preface to the Geeta, stated, with demure and exemplary gravity, that in the estimation of the Brahmins it is the sacred repository of the sublimest doctrines and mysteries, and ventured a conjecture at the design of its author; but avoided committing himself in any estimate of its merits,

and slyly threw on the collective Christian wise-men of Europe the responsibility of deciding for or against the divine Brahminical revelation.

The hopes which the appearance of the Geeta had but too desperately blighted, were utterly death-smitten and shrivelled up by the Institutes ; since this latter greater work not only had its own due proportion of all that is abhorrent to reason and disgusting to taste, but, as constituting or illustrating the grand basis of the religious economy, it necessarily certified us of what must be, substantially, the quality of the whole mass of sacred rubbish in the repository of Benares. Such then was the end and the reward of the pious faith and hope, with which our benighted spirits had so long been looking toward the expected Brahminical revelations. We were now, for the most part, quite content to forego the privilege of reading any more of their law and their prophets. But our eastern scholars,—whether it is in order to convince us that our despondency has been premature ; or to avenge the rejected gods by plaguing us ; or whether a latent zeal for Christianity, (how little suspected !) was seeking to drive us into it by an aggravated impetus of recoil ; or whether, more probably, it was considered that, as our government has taken the heathen worship under direct and special patronage, it was but a point of consistency to promote the study of the books which give the pattern and celebrate the objects of that worship ;—whatever has been the design, those scholars have, in spite of all our chagrin, and our mutters and murmurs of “ *Ohe ! jam satis est,*” continued, through the Asiatic Researches, and other channels, an unremitted and merciless persecution of our galled and mortified feelings, by their successive abstracts and translations from the “ Holy Scriptures” of the Brahmins ; and we that, not very long since, had been so confidently anticipating from those sacred works all the delights of the richest poetry, and all the elevating sentiments of a most sublime religion, are feeling and looking just as any person would do, that, having eagerly fallen to devour some supposed choice dainty which proved on trial to be liberally mixed

with sand, cinders, and even still less delectable substances, should be forced to prolong the repast, while some of these ingredients were constantly crashing between his teeth. It is perfectly right, however, that this persecution should go on to a yet considerably greater length. Let our infidels, who could have the assurance and the stupidity to affect an air of lightly-despatching contempt for the authority of the Bible and the reason of its believers, while they were prompt with a manner and language of reverence and affiance at any mention of the Indian Sastras, let them be glutted and gorged to loathing and strangulation with this Amrita, this their extolled Hindoo elixir of life. Let them enjoy such a regale as Moses gave to the idolatrous Israelites, and be made to drink, in the vehicle of translations from the Sanscrit, the pounded substance of all the Indian gods. The Baptist missionaries, who have now begun to lend a hand in the preparation of this luxury, have a peculiar right to administer it, and to witness the repugnant grimaces of the recipients. For they have been traduced, and hooted, and almost cursed, by all sorts of people, civil and military, lay and ecclesiastical, for their bigotry and fanaticism, in protesting in a pagan land against the pagan superstitions. Some refuse substances, put in human shape, have raved and bullied about the flagrant injustice committed against the heathens, in suffering these men to offer to them the Bible as a book worthy to supplant their piles of mythological legends. And persons wishing to carry not only some appearance of decorum, but even somewhat of the dignity of philosophy, have professed to wish that the narrow-minded zealots for *one religion* had understanding enough to learn the proper respect for the religious institutions and scriptures of other nations, especially those of an immense people, who can point back to a splendid state of their hierarchy and sacred literature in the remotest ages. The most ingenious malice, had that been the actuating principle of the missionaries, could not have fallen on a more effectual expedient of revenge, than that of opening in this manner to the English public those

“religions” and “scriptures,” to which these judicious persons have taken credit to themselves for extending their liberality. And that they may accomplish in the most decisive manner whatever good is to be effected by this expedient, we earnestly hope their plan will be to translate a moderate portion of several of the most celebrated works, rather than the whole of any one of them. It would be a most deplorable waste of their labour and time to translate the whole, for instance, of the present work, which would probably extend to ten such volumes as that before us. We are persuaded they will be convinced it would be a seriously immoral consumption of time also in the readers, surrounded with such a multitude of better things claiming to be read or to be done, to traverse the whole breadth of such a continent of absurdity. But indeed it is probable no mortal would be found capable of so much perseverance,—except, perhaps, Mr. Twining, and the noted Major, and two or three other personages, the remission of whose pamphleteering labours against the propagation of Christianity in India, may have now left them leisure for so congenial an occupation. And in the daily expectation of the fulfilment of their predictions, that the permitted continuance of the missionaries in India would infallibly cause the speedy and total expulsion of the English from that country, we think these gentlemen should be peculiarly thankful for whatever translated portions of the “holy scriptures” can be obtained, before the catastrophe that will put an end to the translating.

In a much too brief advertisement, the translators state the occasion and nature of their undertaking. The religion and literature, the manners and customs of the Hindoos have become the objects of a more general curiosity than in any former time, and of these, they observe, “a clear idea can be obtained only from a connected perusal of their writings.” Under this impression, Sir J. Anstruther, the late president of the Asiatic Society, had

“Indicated a wish to the Society of Missionaries at Serampore, that they would undertake the work of translating such of the Sanskrit

writings as a Committee, formed from the Asiatic Society and the college of Fort-William, should deem worthy of the public notice; and, in consideration of the great expense necessarily attending an undertaking of this nature, these learned bodies generously came forward with a monthly indemnification of three hundred rupees. In addition to this, the late President of the Asiatic Society, anxious for the advancement of Eastern literature, addressed a letter to the different learned institutions in Europe soliciting their patronage to this undertaking."

It was proposed to print in the original, accompanied by a translation as nearly literal as the genius of the two languages would admit, the principal works found in the Sanscrit, "particularly those that are held sacred by the Hindoos, or those which may be most illustrative of their manners, their history, or their religion, including also the principal works of science." The committee "made choice of the Ramayuna of Valmeeki to be the first in the series of translations." "The reverence in which it is held, the extent of country through which it is circulated, and the interesting view which it exhibits of the religion, the doctrines, the mythology, the current ideas, and the manners and customs of the Hindoos, combine to justify their selection."

"The translators have only to observe, that a strict conformity to the original has been the object constantly kept in view. To this has been sacrificed, not only elegance of expression, but in some places perspicuity. A free translation would have been an easier task; but esteeming it their duty to lay before the public, not merely the story and machinery, but the imagery, the sentiment, and the very idiom of the poem, they have attempted this as far as the difference of the two languages would permit. And they trust a candid public will excuse every defect of phraseology, when it is understood that the object has been to present the original poem in its native simplicity."

It may seem a duty of our office to try at something like an abstract of this epic story, or rather farrago; but it is such a formless jumble, that we would gladly be excused from attempting more than a slight notice of the principal matters. There can be no obligation on even the humblest critic, to expend much time on what no intelligent creature in England above the age of ten, (unless the epithet intelligent could be applied to a certain half-dozen of heathen pamphleteers) will read without

the utmost contempt. Any little value attributable to it, is purely of that incidental kind which is possessed by all literary relics that, however worthless on the score of wisdom or genius, afford illustrations of the state of understanding, of the notions and the manners, of an ancient and remote people. This one claim being admitted and disposed of, there scarcely can be found, within the ample scope of our language, any terms capable of adequately expressing the despicableness of this Indian epic, which has been and continues to be regarded as a *divine* performance by so many millions of the people of Asia; and on the value of even the first little section of which its author, at the close of that section, makes this solemn deposition :

"This relation imparts life, and fame, and strength, to those who hear it. Whoever reads the story of Rama, will be delivered from all sin. He who constantly peruses this section, in the hearing and repetition of which consists holiness, shall, together with his whole progeny, be for ever delivered from all pain, distress, and sorrow. He who in faith reads this (section) amidst a circle of wise men,* will thereby obtain the fruit which arises from perusing the whole Ramayuna, secure to himself the blessings connected with all the states of men, and dying be absorbed into the deity. A brahman, reading this, becomes mighty in learning and eloquence. The descendant of a Kshutriya reading it will become a monarch; a Vishya reading, will obtain a most prosperous degree of trade; and a Shoodra hearing† it, will become great.—p. 18.

This gives a very tolerable antepast of the general quality of the work, in point of what, in our part of the world, is called *sense*. And indeed, the grand characteristic distinction of this performance, so far as it proceeds in this volume, and of the other great works, as they are termed, of Hindoo genius, so far as may be judged from short portions of them translated, is the *negation of reason*. Imagine a tribe of human beings in whom the intellectual faculty, strictly so called, should suddenly become extinct while imagination remained, and, on being thus rid of its master, should instantly spring abroad into all the possibilities of wild and casual

* "This is one mode in which, with much solemnity, the Ramayuna is constantly read."

† "A Shoodra is not permitted to read it."

excursion ; the *geniuses* of such a tribe, that is, the individuals possessed of a more lively imagination than the rest, would write just such poetry as the Ramayuna. It shows, throughout, we do not say a violation, or rejection, but rather a clear absence, a total non-perception, of the principles of proportion and analogy, of the laws of consistency and probability. There is a full abrogation of all the rules, definitive of the relation between cause and effect. Consequently any cause may produce any effect ; the mouse may eat the mountain, Jonah may swallow the whale ; and the author appears to rate his success in the effort at grandeur, very much in proportion to the aggravated excess of the absurdity, the superlative *degree*, if we might so express it, of the impossibility. Probability is assumed for every proposition or image that may be *put in words*, though by its essential inconsistency it defy the power of conception. And if, for a few moments, the poet happens to keep clear of things impossible in the strict sense, that is, things of which the definition would involve a contradiction, he can hardly fail to be found in what is, doubtless, according to whoever is the Hindoo Longinus, the next lower degree of sublimity, the creating of monstrosities ; describing beings and actions which, though not metaphysically impossible, are out of all analogy with what we see or can otherwise know of the order of the creation. Thus a creature with an elephant's body and fifty human heads, singing a grand chorus, is not an impossible being in the strict sense, however desperate an undertaking it might be to go in search of it to any part of the mundane system ; and the only objection a Hindoo poet would have to such a fiction, would arise from its being too diminutive and tame an effort of absurdity,—unless he might be allowed to say that the body was of the bulk of a vast mountain, and that each of the heads roared a tempest.

It is but very rarely, that for a moment the absurdity of this poetry is confined to any thing so near the neighbourhood of rationality, as what we may denominate simple enormousness,—that is, the swelling of

agents and actions to a magnitude which we know to be far beyond any thing in reality, but still in conformity to a certain scale, by which these extraordinary beings are kept in some assignable proportion to the ordinary ones of their genus, and by which a due proportion is kept between the agents and the things they accomplish; as Homer, a manufacturer of giants in a very small way, contrives to avoid disgusting us when he makes some of his combatants easily toss such stones as ten men of the common sort could not lift. Even in the description of the people of Brobdignag, (to say nothing of the strong satirical sense which is the substratum of all the Gulliver fictions) a strict law of consistency and proportion is observed throughout all the prodigious giantisms, evincing the constant intervention of intellect. In the Ramayuna, all is pure measureless raving. An imagination which seems to combine the advantages of mania, superstition, and drunkenness, is put a-going, makes a set of what it names worlds, of its own, and fills them with all sorts of agents; gods, sages, demi-god-monkies, and a numberless diversity of fantastic entities, at once magnified and distorted to the last transcendent madness of extravagance,—some additional monster still striding and bellowing into the hurly-burly, whenever the poet thinks it not sufficiently turbulent and chaotic. None of these agents are exhibited with any defined nature, or ascertained measure of power, or regular mode of action. They any of them can do, and are made to do, just whatever happens to dash into the fancy of the poetic raver. A sage is represented as frightening all the gods; and if the idea of his ordering and forcing them all into his snuff-box had happened to come into the poet's head, they had undoubtedly been made to hold their court there some ten thousand years, at the least. And thus the narration, if so slightly connected a course of stories can be so called, is made up of a set of achievements which confound all attempts to form a steady notion of the nature and capacities, positive or relative, of any of the beings that accomplish them; while the stories are so perfectly matchless in silly extravagance,

that the very utmost absurdity and foolery of the most desperate European rant and mock-heroic, creep and toil, as if under the weight of comparative rationality, at an infinite distance behind the enormous vapour-composed giant of Hindoo poetry. The more the writer displays of *his* sort of grandeur, the more contempt the reader feels; the measureless vastness of all the personages and operations, which was sublimity in his account, and which almost overpowers all the Brahmins of Hindoostan with religious awe, is to us exactly imbecility seen through an immensely magnifying medium; and the mind labours for a greater ability of despising, than it has ever, in the ordinary course of its exercise, been excited to acquire.

It is as a reputed great work of genius that the Ramayuna will encounter utter contempt in Europe, separately from, as far as we can separate and make allowances for, its character as a teacher of a monstrous and puerile mythology. When this kind of allowance has been made for Homer, Virgil, and Ovid, what remains is, that they are very great poets. Even the advantage usually and reasonably proposed to be communicated by making better known the ancient writings of a people, that of our obtaining a knowledge of their manners from pictures drawn by themselves will be sought in vain from a performance like this, in which all things are ambitiously, though childishly, preternatural. It was, for instance, probably no part of the ancient manners and customs of India, for an individual to perform sacred austerities, as they are called, in a particular place for a thousand, or ten thousand years together.

As to what form the beautiful spangles of our western poetry and eloquence, the original and apposite metaphors and comparisons, we should think there is nothing of the kind to be found in this grand oriental performance. There are indeed metaphors and comparisons; but, as far as we can judge, they are a mere commonplace of the country where the poet lived. The moon and stars, a number of animals and vegetables, some particular gods and heroes, &c. &c., were become a common

stock for the use of all that wanted tropes in speech or writing; so that there was no more novelty or ingenuity in introducing them, than there is among us in repeating those rare similies, as rotten as a pear, as sound as a bell, as obstinate as a swine, as valiant as Alexander, and so forth. It is not to be pointedly objected to this, or any other eastern performance in particular, that the analogy in the simile or metaphor is usually very slight and general, as this is a characteristic of almost all oriental composition.

The quantity of general remark we have been betrayed into, leaves no room for any attempt at displaying in detail the qualities or parts of this first book of the *Ramayuna*. And we repeat we cannot acknowledge any duty of wasting so much labour, on what forms a more egregious mass of folly than would be produced by any one of our readers that should keep a month's diary, (or rather *noctuary*, since they undoubtedly all rise early in a morning) of his dreams. In the descriptive remarks we have made, we have been able to give but an extremely feeble idea of the surpassing excess of absurdity which prevails throughout the production, which is really worth any one's reading that cares to see the *maximum* of that quality. The basis of the story is the birth, life, and adventures, of Rama, who is an incarnation of the god Vishnu, a god evidently of the foremost rank, but of *what* power or excellence, as contradistinguished from his brother *magnates*, we may safely defy all the Brahmins in India, and their disciples in England, to show, from this or their other sacred books; for all these deities seem jumbled, as by purely accidental evolutions, into bigness and littleness by turns. The king, whose son Vishnu consented to become at the persuasion of all the gods, who were terrified by Ravuna, a demon whose pernicious designs could be frustrated by no celestial being but one in human shape, had been long childless, and had been performing a course of religious austerities to obtain from Brahma, (or whether in spite of him, is not clear) the happiness of an heir. The favour was granted, and Rama was the prince. He of course gave, in early

years, amazing signs of the power that was in due time to perform achievements which were to astonish and shake the universe. Many adventures, however, are related before his career of action commences ; and after he does come into play, the narration is loaded with many bulky episodes about the adventures of other heroes. Of one of these personages it is stated, that, like Rama's father, he was childless, and that he had been engaged, if we mistake not, several thousand years in religious austerities, to induce the gods, or the king of them, to confer a similar favour. It was granted to some purpose ; for he had two consorts, and it was promised that the one should bring him one son, of transcendent merit and prowess, and the other—sixty thousand, inferior to that one, but yet all of great talents and expectations ; and it was offered to the choice of the two ladies which would be the mother of the one, and which of the sixty thousand. The latter undertaking may seem to involve very considerable difficulties ;—but nothing is difficult in the hands of a Hindoo poet. This daring matron was in due time happily delivered of a tree, a shrub, or whatever it may be called,—a gourd we think it is in the book,—on which the sixty thousand grew, as it might have been nuts or currants, and fell off into the form of so many mighty heroes ; who at their father's command, and in pursuit of a god or demon who had stolen a horse which he had appointed for a sacrifice, dug through the earth from side to side, in various directions, reducing it to the condition of a worm-eaten cork ; and that in a very short time, and in spite of its being of thousands of times greater bulk, than our mathematicians have, in the true spirit of European littleness, mistakenly computed. Another history is to this effect. A royal sage had a cow, named Shubula. When another monarch sage, in marching through the country, stopped on the former sage's farm a little while with a vast army, this cow gave all sorts of liquors, and all sorts of meat, baked, boiled, fried, and in short cooked to the taste of every individual in the army, insomuch that every man was delighted and surprisingly fattened. On going away, it is not

wonderful that his majesty at the head of the army, should, if it had only been to rid himself of his peculating commissariat, request to have this cow, offering, however, a handsome equivalent, as he might very well afford. The request not being complied with, force was had recourse to, to take her away. She however made her escape, and came weeping and expostulating to the feet of her owner. He was afraid to interfere, but she was advised to do the best she could for herself. On which she forthwith rained out an almost innumerable army of terrific warriors, who drove, cut, and slashed, at such a rate, that, the host of the royal cow-stealer, was quickly annihilated. These are tolerably moderate specimens of the general substance of this epic performance. The lingo in which these feats are narrated, defies all imitation.

We cannot fail to be somewhat the wiser, for having a few such things brought into our language; but we think the moral rule relative to the use of time and paper should withstand any very large importations. But indeed taste will do what morality probably would not; for it will be impossible to find in England any considerable number of readers, who will not soon sicken at such entertainment.—If there are any ingenuous men, who, not content to rest religion on plain reason and revelation, must needs seek its primitive elements in an analysis of this branch of ancient mythology, they had much the best go and learn Sanscrit at once.

An insurmountable obstacle to the popularity of this sort of reading in Europe, if the works were attended by no other deterring circumstance, would be the vast number of names by which each of the gods or heroes is designated, this being, as it should seem hardly fewer than the whole catalogue of descriptive epithets deemed most appropriate to them.—We should observe that the learned translators would not have done amiss, to assign their reason for an orthography so widely different from that commonly adopted by our oriental scholars.

[October, 1810.]

Tales of Fashionable Life. By MISS EDGEWORTH, Author of Practical Education, Belinda, &c. 12mo.

ON the supposition, or the chance, that any small number of our readers may not have taken the trouble to acquaint themselves with the distinguishing qualities of the productions of a writer, who has already contributed the amount of more than twenty volumes to the otherwise scanty stock of our literature,—and, if we may judge from the short interval between the works in the latter part of the series, is likely at the very least, to double the number,—it may not be amiss to set down a very few observations, suggested chiefly by the perusal of one portion of her performances, though it belongs by its form to a department over which we do not pretend any right of habitual censorship.

It is evident this writer has a much higher object than merely to amuse. Being very seriously of opinion that mankind want mending, and that she is in possession of one of the most efficacious arts for such a purpose, she has set about the operation in good earnest. But when any machine, material or moral, is wrong, there are a few very obvious prerequisites to the attempt to set it right. The person that undertakes it should know what the machine was designed for; should perceive exactly what part of its present action is defective or mischievous; should discern the cause of this disordered effect; and, for the choice of the implements and method of correction, should have the certainty of the adept, instead of the guesses of the tampering experimenter, or the downright hardihood of ignorant presumption. When the disordered subject to be operated on is a thing of no less importance than human nature, it should seem that these prerequisites are peculiarly indispensable; and the ex-

istence ought to be inferable from the operator's boldness, if we see him putting to the work so confident a hand as that of our author. A hand more confident, apparently, has very seldom been applied to the business of moral correction; and that business is prosecuted in a manner so little implying, on the part of our author, any acknowledgment that she is working on a subordinate ground, and according to the lowest class of the principles of moral discipline,—and therefore so little hinting even the existence of any more elevated and authoritative principles,—that she is placed within the cognizance of a much graver sort of criticism than would at first view appear applicable to a writer of tales. She virtually takes her rank among the teachers who profess to exhibit the comprehensive theory of duty and happiness. She would be considered as undertaking the treatment of what is the most serious and lamentable, as well as what is most light and ridiculous, in human perversity; and according to a method which at all events cannot be exceeded in *soundness*, however it may prove in point of efficacy.

Now when we advert to the prerequisites for such an undertaking, we cannot repress the suspicion that our author is unqualified for it. It is a grand point of incompetency if she is totally ignorant what the human race exists for. And there appears nothing in the present, or such other of her works as we have happened to look into, to prevent the surmise, that this question would completely baffle her. Reduce her to say what human creatures were made for, and there would be an end of her volubility. Whether our species were intended as an exhibition for the amusement of some superior, invisible, and malignant intelligences; or were sent here to expiate the crimes of some pre-existent state; or were made for the purpose, as some philosophers will have it and phrase it, of *developing the faculties of the earth*, that is to say, managing its vegetable produce, extracting the wealth of its mines, and the like; or were merely a contrivance for giving to a certain number of atoms the privilege of being, for a few years, the consti-

tuent particles of warm upright living figures ;—whether they are appointed to any future state of sentiment or rational existence ;—whether, if so, it is to be one fixed state, or a series of transmigrations ; a higher or lower state than the present ; a state of retribution, or bearing no relation to moral qualities ;—whether there be any Supreme Power, that presides over the succession and condition of the race, and will see to their ultimate destination,—or, in short, whether there be any design, contrivance, or intelligent destination in the whole affair, or the fact be not rather, that the species, with all its present circumstances, and whatever is to become of it hereafter, is the production and sport of chance,—all these questions are probably undecided in the mind of our ingenious moralist. And how can she be qualified to conduct the discipline of a kind of beings of the nature and relations of which she is so profoundly ignorant ? If it were not a serious thing on account of its presumption, would it not be an incomparably ludicrous one on account of its absurdity, that a popular instructor should be most busily enforcing a set of principles of action—not as confessedly superficial and occasional, and merely subservient to a specific purpose, but as fundamental and comprehensive—while that instructor does not know whether the creatures, whose characters are attempted to be formed on those principles, are bound or not by the laws of a Supreme Governor, nor whether they are to be affected by the right or wrong of moral principles for only a few times twelve months, or to all eternity ?—Here an admirer of Miss Edgeworth's moral philosophy might be expected to say, “ But why may not our professor be allowed to set these considerations out of the question ; since many things in the theory of morals are very clear and very important independently of them ? Integrity, prudence, industry, generosity, and good manners, can be shown to be vitally connected with our immediate interests, and powerfully enforced on that ground, whether there be or be not a Supreme Governor and Judge, and a future life ; and why may not our instructor hold this ground, exempt from the interference of theology ? What

we see we know : we can actually survey the whole scope of what you call the *present* life of human creatures, and can discern how its happiness is affected by the virtues and vices which our professor so forcibly illustrates : and why may it not be a very useful employment to teach the art of happiness *thus far*, whatever may ultimately be found to be the truth or error of the speculations on invisible beings and future existences ?”

To this the obvious reply would be, first—in terms of identical import with those we have already used—that the ingenious preceptress does not give her pupils the slightest word of warning, that it is *possible* their moral interests may be of an extent infinitely beyond any thing she takes into account : that if the case is so, her philosophy however useful to a certain length, in a particular way, cannot but be infinitely inadequate as a disciplinary provision for their *entire* interests ; and that, therefore, in consideration of such a possibility, it is their serious duty to inquire how much more it may be indispensable to learn, than she ever professes to teach them. She does not tell them, and would deem it excessively officious and fanatical in any one that should do it for her, that if there be any truth—nay, if there be the bare *possibility* of truth—in what religionists believe and teach—a philosopher like her cannot be admitted as competent to contribute to the happiness of mankind, in a much higher capacity than the persons that make clothes and furnish houses. She may not, in so many words, assert it would be idle or delusive to think of proposing any superior and more remotely prospective system of moral principles : but all appearances are carefully kept up to the point of implying as much ; and we apprehend she would be diverted, or would be fretted, just as the mood of her mind happened at the moment to be, to hear a sensible person, after reading her volumes, say,—“very just, very instructive, on a narrow and vulgar ground of moral calculation ; it is well fitted to make me a reputable sort of a man, and not altogether useless, during a few changes of the moon : if I were sure of ending after a few of those changes, in nothing but a clod, I do not

know that I should want any thing beyond the lessons of this philosopher's school: but while I believe there is even a chance of a higher destiny, it is an obvious dictate of common sense, that it cannot be safe, and that it would be degrading, to attempt to satisfy myself with a little low scheme of morality, adapted to nothing in existence beyond the mere *convenience* of some score or two of years, more or less." Our *first* censure is, then, that setting up for a moral guide, our author does not pointedly state to her followers, that as it is but a very short stage she can pretend to conduct them, they had need—if they suspect they shall be obliged to go further—to be looking out, even in the very beginning of this short stage in which she accompanies them, for other guides to undertake for their safety in the remoter region. She presents herself with the air and tone of a person, who would sneer or spurn at the apprehensive insinuated inquiry, whether any change or addition of guides might eventually become necessary.

But, secondly, our author's moral system—on the hypothesis of the truth, or possible truth, of revelation—is not only infinitely deficient, as being calculated to subserve the interests of the human creatures only to so very short a distance, while yet it carefully keeps out of sight all that may be beyond; it is also,—still on the same hypothesis—perniciously erroneous as far as it goes. For it teaches virtue on principles on which virtue itself will not be approved by the Supreme Governor; and it avowedly encourages some dispositions, and directly or by implication tolerates others, which in the judgment of that Governor are absolutely vicious. As to the unsound quality of the virtue here taught, it would be quite enough to observe, that it bears no reference whatever to the will and laws of a superior Being. It is careless, whether there is such a Being,—whether, if there be, men are accountable to him, or not,—whether he has appointed laws,—whether he can enforce them,—whether he can punish the refusal to obey them. In short it is a virtue that would *not be practised for his sake*; which is to be practised solely under the influence

of other considerations; and which would be, at the dictate of those considerations, varied to any extent from any standard alleged to bear his authority. It is really superfluous to say that, on the religious hypothesis, such a virtue is utterly spurious, and partakes radically of the worst principles of vice. It is, besides, unstable in all its laws, as being founded on a combination of principles undefined, arbitrary, capricious, and sometimes incompatible. Pride, honour, generous impulse, calculation of temporal advantage and custom of the country, are convened along with we know not how many other grave authorities, as the components of Miss Edgeworth's moral government—the Amphictyons of her legislative assembly. These authorities being themselves subject, singly or collectively, to no one paramount authority, may vary without end in their compromise with one another, and in their enactment of laws; so that by the time Miss Edgeworth comes to write her last volume in the concluding year of her life, she may chance to find it necessary—in maintaining a faithful adherence to them through all their caprices—to give the name of virtues to sundry things she now calls vices, and *vice versa*. There can be no decisive casuistry on the ground of such a system; and it would be easy to imagine situations in which the question of duty would, even under the present state of that moral legislation which she enjoins us to revere, put her to as complete a nonplus as the question, "What was man made for?"—She is, however, dexterous enough, in general, to avoid such situations. It must be acknowledged, too, that perhaps the greater part of the moral practice which she sanctions, is, taken *merely* as practice, disconnected from all consideration of motives and opinions, substantially the same that the soundest moralist must inculcate,—unless his lectures could be allowed to be silent on the topics of justice in the transactions of business, the advantages of cultivating a habit of general kindness and liberality, exertions for amending the condition of the poor, patient firmness in the prosecution of good designs, with various other things of a character equally unequivocal. But there

are some parts of her practical exhibitions unmarked with any note of disapprobation, where a Christian moralist would apply the most decided censure. She shows, for instance, a very great degree of tolerance for the dissipation of the wealthy classes, if it only stop short of utter frivolity or profligacy, and of ruinous expense. All the virtue she demands of them may easily comport with a prodigious quantity of fashion, and folly, and splendour, and profuseness. They may be allowed to whirl in amusements till they are dead sick, and then have recourse to a little sober useful goodness to recover themselves. They are indeed advised to cultivate their minds; but, as it should seem, for the purpose, mainly, of giving dignity to their rank, and zest and sparkle to the conversations of their idle and elegant parties. They are recommended to become the promoters of useful schemes in their neighbourhoods, and the patrons of the poor; but it does not appear that this philanthropy is required to be carried the length of costing any serious per-centage on their incomes. The grand and ultimate object of all the intellectual and moral exertions to which our author is trying to coax and prompt them, is, confessedly,—self-complacency; and it is evident that, while surrounded incessantly with frivolous and selfish society to compare themselves with, they may assume this self-complacency on the strength of very middling attainments in wisdom and beneficence.

Another gross fault (on the supposition, still, that religion *may* chance to be more than an idle fancy) is our author's tolerance of profaneness. As to some of the instances of what every pious man would regard as profane expressions, either absolutely or by the connexion in which they are put, she will say, perhaps, that they are introduced merely as a language appropriate to the characters; and that those characters were never meant for patterns of excellence. This plea is of little validity for any narrator but the historian of real facts, who has but a partial option as to what he shall relate. In a merely literary court indeed it might go some length in defence of a fictitious writer; but let religion be intro-

duced among the judges in such a court, and the decision would be, that minute truth of fictitious representation involves no moral benefit adequate to compensate the mischief of familiarizing the reader's mind to language which associates the most solemn ideas with the most trifling or detestable. But this happens, in the present instance, to be a needless argument; for the broadest and vilest piece of profaneness comes out in one of what are intended as the *finest* moments, of one of what are intended as the finest characters, in all these volumes. The character,—a spirited, generous, clever fellow, evidently a high favourite of our author,—is young Beaumont, in the tale entitled "*Manœuvring*," in the third volume; the moment is when he is exulting (p. 78) at the news of a great naval victory, in which his most esteemed friend is supposed to have had a share.

We will only add, in order to get to the end of this homily of criticism, that our author's estimate of the evil of vice in general, excepting such vices as are glaringly marked with meanness or cruelty, appears to be exceedingly light in comparison with that which is taught in the school of revelation. And, consistently with this, the sentiments of penitential grief which she attributes to one of her principal characters, Lord Glenthorn, whom she reforms from a very great degree of profligacy, are wonderfully superficial and transient: nay he is even made, in the commencement of his reformation, to reckon up the virtues of his past worthless and vicious life, with a self-complacency which far over-balanced his self-reproaches. And indeed those self-reproaches, when they were felt, had but extremely little of the quality of what, in Christian language is meant by repentance: they are made to have expressed themselves much more in the manner of mortified pride. And this, again, is in perfect consistency with the motives to virtue on which the chief reliance appears to be placed throughout these volumes: for the most powerful of those motives is pride. To manœuvre this passion in every mode which ingenuity can suggest; to ply it with every variety of stimulus, and contrive that at each step of vice some-

thing shall happen to mortify it,—if possible, according to the regular and natural course of cause and effect, if not, by some extraordinary occurrence, taking place at the will of the writer,—and that each step of virtue shall be attended by some circumstance signally gratifying to it,—this is the grand moral machinery of our moralist and reformer. And indeed what else could she do, or what better, after she had resolved that no part of her apparatus should be put in action by “the powers of the world to come?” For as to that intrinsic beauty of virtue which philosophers have pretended to descry and adore, *this* philosopher knew right well how likely it was that such a vision should disclose itself, with all its mystical fascinations, to the frequenters of ball-rooms and card-tables, of galas and operas, of gambling-houses and brothels.

Thus denied, by the quality of the subjects she has to work upon, the assistance of all that has been boasted by sages as the most refined and elevated in philosophy,—and by the limits of her creed, probably, as well as the disposition of her taste, the assistance of those principles professing to come from heaven, and which, whence-soever they have come, have formed the best and sublimest human characters that ever appeared on earth,—our moralist would be an object of much commiseration, if she did not manifest the most entire self-complacency. Yet it is but justice to say that she does not attribute any miraculous power to those sordid moral principles, on the sole operation of which she is content to rest her hopes of human improvement. For on Lord Glenthorn, the hero of the longest and most interesting of these tales, she represents this operation as totally inefficacious till aided by the discovery that he is no Lord; having been substituted in his infancy for the true infant peer by Ellinor O'Donoghoe, the inhabitant of a dirty mud cabin, his mother, and that peer's nurse. And the subject which is thus made to illustrate the inefficacy is, notwithstanding, represented as naturally endowed with very favourable dispositions and very good talents. In the stories of “*Almeria*” and “*Manœuvring*,” the utmost

powers of the reforming discipline are honestly represented as fairly baffled, from beginning to end, the culprits adhering to their faults and follies with inviolable fidelity,—leaving our moral legislator no means of vindicating the merits of her system, but to show that the pride, and other inglorious principles, by the operation of which a reform of conduct was to have been effected, if they cannot amend the subjects of her discipline, can at least make them wretched. And so she leaves them, with as much indifference apparently as that with which a veteran sexton comes away from filling up the grave of one of his neighbours. She does not even, as far as appears, wish to turn them over to methodism, notwithstanding that this has the repute of sometimes working very strange transformations, and might as well have been mentioned as a last expedient worth the trying, in some of those obstinate desperate cases in which all the preparations from the great laboratory at Edgeworthstown, have been employed in vain. Perhaps, however, our author would think such a remedy, even in its utmost success, worse than the disease. Yet it would be a little curious to observe what she really *would* think and say at witnessing an instance in which a person, who had long pursued a foolish or profligate course in easy defiance of all such correctives as constitute her boasted discipline, being, at length, powerfully arrested by the thought of a judgment to come,—should forswear, at once, all his inveterate trifling or deeper immoralities, and adopt, and prosecute to his last hour, and with the highest delight, a far more arduous plan of virtue than any that she has dared to recommend or delineate. There have been very many such instances; and it would be extremely amusing—if some ideas too serious for amusement were not involved,—on citing to her some indubitable example of this kind, to compel her to answer the plain question,—“Is this a good thing—yea or no?”

It was almost solely for the purpose of making a few remarks on the moral tendency of our author's voluminous productions, that we have noticed the work of which we have transcribed the title; and we need say

very few words respecting the other qualities of her books. For predominant good sense, knowledge of the world, discrimination of character, truth in the delineation of manners, and spirited dialogue, it is hardly possible to praise them too much. Most of her characters are formed from the most genuine and ordinary materials of human nature,—with very little admixture of any thing derived from heaven, or the garden of Eden, or the magnificent part of the regions of poetry. There is rarely any thing to awaken for one moment the enthusiasm of an aspiring spirit, delighted to contemplate, and ardent to resemble, a model of ideal excellence. Indeed, a higher order of characters would in a great measure have precluded an exercise of her talents in which she evidently delights, and in which she very highly excels—that is, the analysing of the mixed motives by which persons are often governed, while they are giving themselves credit for being actuated by one simple and perfectly laudable motive; the detecting of all the artifices of dissimulation; and the illustration of all the modes in which selfishness pervades human society. Scarcely has Swift himself evinced a keener scent in pursuit of this sort of game; a sort of game which, we readily acknowledge it is, with certain benevolent limitations, very fair and useful to hunt. And we must acknowledge too, that our author, while passing shrewd, is by no means cynical. She is very expert at contriving situations for bringing out all the qualities of her personages, for contrasting those personages with one another, for creating excellent amusement by their mutual reaction, and for rewarding or punishing their merits or faults. She appears intimately acquainted with the prevailing notions, prejudices, and habits, of the different ranks and classes of society. She can imitate, very satirically, the peculiar diction and slang of each; and has contrived (but indeed it needed very little contrivance) to make the fashionable dialect of the upper ranks sound exceedingly silly. As far as she has had opportunities for observation, she has caught a very discriminative idea of national characters: that of the Irish is

delineated with incomparable accuracy and spirit. It may be added, that our author, possessing a great deal of general knowledge, finds many lucky opportunities for producing it, in short arguments and happy allusions. Unless we had some room for a distinct notice of each of the tales in these volumes it will be no use to mention that their titles are the following ; Ennui—Almeria—Madame de Fleury—The Dun—and Manceuvring : the first and the last each filling an entire volume.

[November, 1810].

Speech of the RIGHT HON. W. WINDHAM in the House of Commons, June 13, 1809, on Lord Erskine's Bill for the more effectual Prevention of Cruelty towards Animals. 8vo.

THE proposal of this Bill to the House of Commons, and its prompt and unceremonious dismissal are sufficiently fresh in recollection. Its fate would doubtless have been the same in that Imperial Assembly, though the author of this speech had been summoned from his seat there before the subject came into discussion. Had it, however, been possible that a great, enlightened, and humane legislator, could have felt any slight degree of hesitation to reject a motion for a law to abridge the license of cruelty; it may well be believed that a speech like this would materially contribute to rid them of the sentimental weakness of entertaining such a scruple. It would have been a truly girlish and laughable thing in a venerable Council—before which an enormous mass of cruelty was incontrovertibly alleged to be habitually perpetrated among the people over whom that Council presided—to have given themselves any trouble about the matter, after witnessing this capital display of that acuteness, that talent for representing a serious subject in a ludicrous light, that power of securing tolerance for a large quantity of fallacy, under protection of a certain portion of important truth, which so remarkably characterized this statesman; we suppose we ought to say *lamented* statesman: for we observe it is the fashion among all sorts of people—Christian or infidel—high political party or low—ins or outs—as soon as a man whose talents have made a figure is gone, to extol him in the topmost epic and elegiac phrases; even though the general operation of his talents had been through life

what these very persons had a thousand times execrated as pernicious.

The speech begins with asserting, that the treatment of brute animals by men, is not a fit subject for legislative enactments; and by citing, as a strong sanction of the rule of exclusion, the conduct of all nations and legislators, none of whom, according to our Senator, ever appointed any laws for the protection of animals, on the pure principle of humane guardianship,—an assertion which he makes in the most unqualified manner, and which his extensive learning would make it rash in us to call in question; since it could not have escaped his knowledge if any national code of laws had ever contained such a sentence as this—"thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn."

From this universal avoidance to enact laws for the protection of brute animals, Mr. Windham argues, that what Lord Erskine mentions, in somewhat exulting terms as a recommendation of his bill, "that it would form a new era of legislation," is rather a ground for suspicion and rejection; since it is not unfair to presume that what all legislators have avoided to do, is something not proper to be done. With plenty of cold shrewdness he adds,

"We ought to have a reasonable distrust of the founders of such eras, lest they should be a little led away by an object of such splendid ambition, and be thinking more of themselves than of the credit of the laws or the interests of the community. To have done that which no one yet had ever thought of doing; to have introduced into legislation, at this period of the world, what had never yet been found in the laws of any country, and that too for a purpose of professed humanity, (or rather of something more than humanity, as commonly understood and practised;) to be the first who had stood up as the champion of the rights of brutes, was as marked a distinction, even though it should not turn out upon examination to be as proud a one, as man could well aspire to."—p. 4.

The sentence which immediately follows is this: "The Legislature, however, must not be carried away with these impulses, of whatever nature they might be," &c. Those who heard and saw Mr. Windham while uttering this, could probably judge whether it was said sarcasti-

cally, or in simple honest gravity. The only thing that *can* make this a question in the minds of those who can merely read the speech, is the recollection of Mr. Windham's notorious propensity to sarcasm;—for that there was a propriety in uttering the sentence gravely, is sufficiently obvious. There was the greatest need of a caution against the too precipitate impulses of humanity in a Legislature which had, through twenty years of most ample discussion and exposure, maintained the Slave-Trade, with its infinite combination of horrors, in easy and sometimes jocular contempt of the appeals to feeling, in a thousand affecting forms, in contempt of the demonstrations of impolicy, and of the references to an Almighty Avenger; and which, when approaching at last, under the ascendancy of administration for the time being, to the long desired abolition, had still such a character in the public opinion that, even when the vast influence of the ministry was taken into the account, the friends of humanity were nevertheless, according to Mr. Clarkson's relation, in a perfect agony of fear till the decision was past. It had been a neglect of duty not to have cautioned, against too hasty and undigested measures for the repression of cruelty, a Legislature which had scouted, during the greatest part of a long series of years, every suggestion of an effort for the termination of war. And (to descend to an inferior circumstance,) the manner in which the Legislature had entertained Mr. Windham's own assertion of the moral and political benefits of bull-baiting, with all its inseparable blackguardism and profaneness, as contrasted with the mischievous effects of going to the conventicle, to hear about the worth of the soul, preparation for a future state, and such like matters—had fully shown him the propriety of admonishing that Legislature not to be rashly impetuous in their enactments even against barbarous practices. There was no lesson so becoming in the veteran senator, so near the end of his labours, to give, nor half so needful to the assembly which he addressed—as that which virtuous and ardent minds so reluctantly learn, the wisdom of being sometimes a little more slow and deliberate even

in doing good, than the first generous "impulses" would be willing to permit. There is no knowing to what dangerous lengths such impulses may lead, if unrestrained by such wisdom. Had this bill, for instance, for the prevention of cruelty to animals been suffered to pass, who was to insure the country against being brought, at the next parliamentary movement of these "impulses," to the brink of irretrieval ruin, by an act to abrogate, in spite of Mr. Windham's cool approbation of its existence, (p. 9) that power under the poor-laws, by the exercise of which, he says, "paupers at the point of death, and women expecting at every moment to be seized with the pangs of labour, are turned out into the streets or roads, sooner than by the death in one case, or the birth in the other, a burden should be brought upon the parish?"

Next comes the customary cant, proper always to be canted, when a practical attempt at doing some good is to be opposed, about the "desirableness of the object, speaking abstractedly." "As far," says he, "as mere uninstructed wishes went, every man must wish that the sufferings of all animated nature were less than they are." That this sort of language fully deserves, in this place, the name we have given it, we shall have occasion to show. The speaker does however, it must be confessed, go on to say, that we must not in so good a cause be content with mere wishes; and, defining morality itself "a desire rationally conducted to promote general happiness," he exhorts all, in their private individual capacity, to do all they can to lessen the measure of suffering, as well among the brute as the rational animals. Excuse him from any duty of promoting the good design in his high capacity of legislator, in which he has so much more than the power of a mere private person,—and he will lecture the whole nation on the duty of every man as a private person, to exert the utmost of his inferior power in the prevention of cruelty; and on the absurdity of a people's expecting their governors to be virtuous in substitution for them. It is thus that moral obligations are bandied from class to class in society: the

people alleging that some important reform cannot be effected without the interposing power of their governors, and the governors declaring that the concern is not within the proper sphere of legislation—nay, it may be, professing that they *cannot* so far interfere with the “*liberty of the subject!*” Any thing in the strain of this last profession coming from such a man as Mr. Windham is, to be sure, incomparably ludicrous.

In the desultory manner that prevails throughout this speech, which is quite as disorderly as it is acute, the orator proceeds to animadvert on Lord Erskine's preamble to his bill, framed in the following terms,—“Whereas it has pleased Almighty God to subdue to the dominion, use, and comfort of man, the strength and faculties of many useful animals, and to provide others for his food; and whereas the abuse of that dominion, by cruel and oppressive treatment of such animals, is not only highly unjust and immoral, but most pernicious in its example, having an evident tendency to harden the heart against the natural feelings of humanity:” “A preamble,” says Mr. Windham, “containing a lofty maxim of morality or theology, too grand to be correct, too sublime to be seen distinctly, and most ludicrously disproportioned to the enactments that follow.” From which observation it should be evident that the less a legislator adverts to the Supreme Lawgiver the better, and that no sublime conceptions can be correct or distinct. *Why* the disproportion is inevitably so great between the “lofty maxim” and the enactments of the bill, is in part most forcibly shown by Mr. Windham himself, where he represents the impossibility of making effectual laws against the cruelties practised by the rich.

It was also very unfair, in remarking this disparity, to take no notice of Lord Erskine's avowed object in setting out with the declaration of such a comprehensive moral principle, while fully aware that the specific enactments must be far more limited than such a principle would seem to authorize, and even to require. The object was, as he represented much at large, to give the utmost solemnity and sanction of legislative promulgation to a

moral principle, in order to enforce it on the attention and the conscience of the people; and thus to carry its efficacy, by a purely moral operation, to an extent far beyond the reach of laws, which unavoidably must, from the peculiar nature of the subject, be constructed on a very narrow scale, and leave incomparably more of what belongs to that subject without, than they could take within, their cognizance.

Affecting again to acknowledge the claims of humanity in behalf of brutes, Mr. Windham, instead of lending the assistance of his discriminating understanding to ascertain the extent of those claims, and to discuss, seriously, the question whether some of them might not be made effective in the shape of a law,—attempts to turn them into ridicule by a sort of sneer at Lord Erskine's bill for not going the length of prohibiting animal food. He then suddenly turns round on the remonstrants against cruelty with the question—"What is humanity?" as much as to say, that a little consideration would convict them of extreme silliness in having so precipitately declared against the "very general practice of buying up horses still alive, but not capable of being ever further abused by any kind of labour; and taking them in great numbers to slaughter-houses, not to be killed at once, but left without sustenance, and some of them literally starved to death, that the market might be gradually supplied; the poor animals in the mean time being reduced to eat their own dung, and frequently gnawing one another's manes in the agonies of hunger." In the view of such facts he, in the most pleasant humour imaginable, spurts such a question, as is enough of itself, without more ado, to make an end of the business. It was not that he did not know well that there exist many atrocious practices of which the one here described is but a fair specimen: but he knew also in what society he might, without being esteemed ever the worse, employ a mixture of jocular and quibble to explode all deliberation on such matters. The question "What is humanity?" is triumphantly repeated; and all the intellectual dexterity, which a mind really desirous of promoting it

would have anxiously exerted in trying to fix a few plain practical distinctions and rules, is employed not in merely exposing, but aggravating the legislative difficulties of the subject. The orator's reasoning is, that humanity is not a thing capable of being defined by precise limits : that no regulations could be enacted, on any wide scale, which would not leave the generality of occurring cases very much to the discretion and arbitrary decision of some living tribunal : that this would be to "require men to live by an unknown rule," and to "make the condition of life uncertain, by exposing men to the operation of a law which they cannot know till it visits them in the shape of punishment : " and that while such a plan of government is extremely undesirable and dangerous in *all* cases, though in some few perhaps unavoidable ; in the department of public regulation now in question, it would be peculiarly mischievous,—in consequence of the variable and capricious feelings by which the appointed authorities would be liable to be actuated in their estimates of humanity and cruelty,—in consequence of the impunity which would be enjoyed by the rich, and therefore by the judges themselves, generally of course persons of that class ("as few," our senator says, "would inform against his worship, the 'squire, because he had ridden his hunter to death, or unmercifully whipped, or in a fit of passion shot, his pointer,")—and in consequence of the prodigious opening that would be given, under such a discretionary administration of justice, for the operation of all the selfish and malicious passions ; for hypocrisy and the love of power. He expatiates with gleeful shrewdness on a passion which, he says, though not often adverted to, is at all times operating throughout the community with mighty force,—the love of tormenting. This passion most eagerly seizes on any thing that can give it a colour of concern for the public good.

"It is not to be told how eager it is when animated and sanctioned by the auxiliary motive of supposed zeal for the public service. It is childish for people to ask, what pleasure can any one have in tormenting others ? None in the mere pain inflicted, but the greatest possible in the

various effects which may accompany it,—in the parade of virtue and in the exercise of power. A man cannot torment another without a considerable exercise of power,—in itself a pretty strong and general passion. But if he can at once exercise his power and make a parade of his virtue (which will eminently be the case in the powers to be exercised under this law), the combination of the two forms a motive which we might fairly say, flesh and blood could not withstand. In what a state then should we put the lower orders of people (for they were the only persons who would be affected), when we should let loose upon them such a principle of action, armed with such a weapon as this bill would put into its hands? All the fanatical views and feelings, all the little bustling spirit of regulation, all the private enmities and quarrels would be at work, in addition to those more general passions before stated, and men would be daily punished by summary jurisdiction, or left to wait in gaol for the meeting of a more regular tribunal, for offences which are incapable of being defined, and which must be left therefore, to the arbitrary and fluctuating standard which the judge in either case might happen to carry in his breast.”—p. 16.

Now, in the first place, it is not a little ludicrous, nor a little disgusting, to hear *this* gentleman affecting all this solicitude not to harass the people by a vague and sweeping mode of legislation, and extra-legal exertions of authority: *this* personage, who, when *another* class of the faults of the community were in discussion, could so zealously abet the suspension of the Habeas Corpus—that is, virtually, a suspension of the whole benefits of law, both as to instruction and protection; who could so cheerfully co-operate to enact laws of the most inquisitorial and summary nature; and who could so self-complacently, when in power, avow that he and his associates were ready to “exert a vigour beyond the law.”

In the next place, though there is a considerable portion of important truth in his representation, it is obviously truth stated all on one side, and stated with all possible exaggeration. It is the argument of an advocate defending the cause of a person accused, and with undeniable justice accused, of some of the cruel practices in question. For had he argued the subject in the impartial spirit required in a legislator, he would have admitted, or rather insisted, that many modes of cruelty to animals are sufficiently definable for specific enactment. Where for instance, should be the difficulty of defining the practice of which we have quoted the above descrip-

tion from Lord Erskine's speech? It would be easy to define many of the modes and degrees of cruelty so notorious in the system, as it has been called, of our coach-travelling; modes and degrees in judging of which both the maker and executor of the law would receive so much assistance from the very tangible circumstances of weight of vehicle and loading, and length of stage. There would be no very desperate perplexity in adjusting legal cognizance of what are called races against time, of the amusement of cock-fighting, or that of destroying cocks by tying them to a post and throwing sticks at them, of skinning eels alive, and several other very definable modes of cruelty.

The greater number, however, of the cruelties to which it is desirable to extend the power of the law, are probably such as the law could designate only in very general terms; many of them consisting in an excessive degree of an infliction, or of a compulsion to labour, of which a smaller degree would not have been a cruelty—and many consisting in such combinations of circumstances as no law can specifically provide against. With respect, therefore, to the larger part of its intended operation, the law must be content to set forth, with the greatest possible publicity, a few general rules; and entrust the penal application of these principles in the particular instances, to a magistracy or court appointed for the purpose. Now there is no denying that to such an administration of the proposed law, the evils so urgently objected by our senator would in some degree be incident. There would be some opportunities afforded for the indulgence of a petty, consequential, interfering disposition, and for attempting to wreak, under a semblance of virtuous feeling, some of the resentments which are always existing, less or more, among neighbours, in every part of the country. The judges would, from their rank, be less liable to receive any deserved share of the vindictive application of the law than the class of persons most ordinarily arraigned before them. They would not, in deliberating and pronouncing, be able to divest themselves entirely of passion: and the adjudg-

ments might in some very rare instances carry a greater degree of severity than the culprits had been aware they were exposing themselves to incur.

If the evil sought to be remedied were very slight ; if it but consisted in some trifling injury to property ; or if the alleged offences against humanity went no greater length than to hurt the affected sensibility which Mr. Windham ridicules so sarcastically in the fine ladies—a legislature might very properly hesitate to constitute such a jurisdiction. But the appeal may be made to all persons of real and sober sensibility, whether the evil in question be of so trifling an amount. Let any man who has been trained to habits of reflection and kindness, and has spent a considerable portion of his time in travelling or in great towns, try to recollect all the instances of cruelty he has witnessed, or heard related in places where they had recently occurred, during the last five or ten years :—let him then consider how many thousand other persons in England have been witnessing each a different series of instances, during the same period :—let the whole, if it were possible, be brought in imagination into one view : all that has been perpetrated on animals in momentary fury ; in deliberate ingenious revenge ; in the pure unprovoked love of tormenting ; in the barbarous carelessness of all feelings of want and pain with which animals are peculiarly regarded, after they are committed to those, (generally hardened miscreants) whose business is to reserve or convey them for slaughter ; in the slow death of a compulsory labour far beyond any reasonable exertion of the animal's strength ; in the deficiency of needful sustenance, in some instances combined with this excess of labour ; and finally in sanguinary sports, both vulgar and genteel. What an enormous mass of crime this collective view charges on the community, to stand to the final account of the individuals according to their degrees of participation !

This, however, is viewing only one part of the evil ; and so much crime, considered simply as against the suffering animals, is a sufficiently black account for a

civilized and Christian country. But let one moment's thought be directed to the other part of the subject,—the effect of this mass of cruelty on the moral feelings of the people. No one worth consulting, it may be presumed, will make any question whether the feelings of a mind in a *proper* state, in beholding or thinking of these cruelties, would be pity and indignation, not unmingled with horror, in some cases of peculiar atrocity. But a great majority of the people of our nation, the poor and the rich, the vulgar and the polished, the insignificant and—excepting the House of Commons—the powerful, can observe and can hear of these things without any such feelings whatever. Now what can be the cause of this insensibility, but our having been familiarized to the sight and perpetration of these cruelties, and our having always seen them under the sanction of legal impunity?—since probably there is cultivation enough in this country to diffuse a tolerably general conviction of the odiousness of any one sort of flagrant wickedness, unless our moral feelings have been depraved by its frequent perpetration, beheld or participated, and by its being suffered, as a thing too trifling for so serious a cognizance as that of the law of the land. It is clear then that the cruelty so prevalent in our country, and so very lightly thought of by the departed statesman, actually *has* a most hateful influence on our moral feelings; and it is a truth as obvious as it is serious, and as it is by governments disregarded, that, according to Lord Erskine's preamble, cruel and oppressive treatment of animals, is not only highly unjust and immoral," as towards *them*, "but most pernicious in its *example*, having an evident tendency to harden the heart against the natural feelings of humanity." Doubtless the evident native propensity of the human mind to cruelty leaves but half the existing hard-heartedness with respect to the sufferings of animals to the credit of example. But still, in order to avoid being compelled to consider human nature as essentially quite demoniac, we must ascribe much to *this* depraving source, when we see even persons of condition and cultivation—and who

are observant of many of the proprieties of conduct—manifesting the most perfect insensibility at the sight, for many hours successively, of the shattered, feeble condition, the exhausting toil, and the pains of direct infliction, of the most generous, patient, and useful animals, thus suffering for the convenience, or perhaps by the direct order of these very persons : when we see a long succession of sets of post horses, on the road to a fashionable watering-place, bathed in sweat and foam, panting and almost dying, before a massy carriage, that bears the most disgraceful decoration, as in such a case it is, of the splendidly emblazoned family arms, surmounted possibly with a coronet or even a mitre ; when we hear of the horses all dropping down in the yard of the hotel, after bringing to the rendezvous of dissipation an individual of the first rank in the land : when we hear, as it has happened to us to hear, persons of the sacred profession ridiculing, as an extravagant sort or affectation of sensibility, a very soberly expressed commiseration of the habitual sufferings of our stage and hackney-coach horses : when we see that papas and mammas, with the precious addition of aunts, cousins, and friends, will suffer children, within their sight, to glut the native cruelty so justly ascribed to children by Dr. Johnson, with the sufferings of insects, young birds, or any little animals they dare torment, and will make you understand that you are rather impertinent to hint the impropriety of such a permission, or to rescue one of the victims : and when we hear—to add but one count to an indictment that might with perfect justice be made twenty times as long—when we hear persons of all imaginable respectability, refinement, good-breeding, and so forth, and who yesterday went over their prayer-book at church with the most edifying decorum—alleging perhaps some slight pretended difference in the delicacy of the appearance of the meat on their tables, as a quite sufficient argument against any method of causing the instantaneous death of the animal to be killed, by shooting through the head or otherwise : and this too in London—where the certain knowledge that, on an average, thousands of animals are

slaughtered for food daily, within a very few miles of any one of the habitations, might assist to aggravate, in a reflective mind, the idea of the comparatively protracted anguish suffered in the usual mode of slaughter; in London—of which good city however, nearly *all* the people would at last suspect the legislature of insanity if it were possible it could be caught deliberating on an enactment to lessen, to reduce almost to nothing, this collective enormous measure of anguish, by enforcing the most expeditious mode of causing death. We cannot contemplate this general barbarity of mind, showing itself in so many ways, in this civilized land, without being constrained to attribute a considerable portion of it to the influence of that prevalent example which tends to destroy or rather preclude sensibility, not simply by making us familiar with the sight and practice of cruelty, but by also forming and fixing, imperceptibly, in our minds, a contemptuous estimate of the pains and pleasures of the brute animals; an estimate to which the law very powerfully contributes by its silence: it being almost impossible to make the popular mind connect any idea of very aggravated guilt with things of which even in their greatest excess, the law takes no notice, if those things are of the substantial tangible nature of actions. We are thus practically taught, from our very infancy, that the pleasurable and painful sensations of animals are not worth our care; that it is not of the smallest consequence what they are made to suffer, so that they are not rendered less serviceable to us by the suffering; that if we can even draw amusement from inflicting pain on them, it is all very well; that in short they have *no rights*, as sentient beings existing for their own sakes as well as for ours. With respect then to one whole department of morality—and that too extending in contact with a very large part of the economy of life—the mind of the greater proportion of the people of this country is kept, by a continual process, in a state of extreme depravation, deficient by one whole class of indispensable moral sentiments. This depravation would constitute a dreadful amount of evil, even if the brute

tribes were exclusively the objects of its operation. But how foolish it would be to imagine that this insensibility to the sufferings of brutes can fail to lessen the sympathy due to human beings. It will be sure to make its effect on the mind perceptible, in the little reluctance with which pain will be inflicted on *them*, and in a very light account of the evils to which they may be doomed. So long as Mr. Windham is remembered, it will not be forgotten with what easy coolness he could talk, in the senate, of our troops on the continent, being "*killed off*." If instances were pretended to be cited of persons who are habitually unfeeling or actively cruel towards animals, being notwithstanding kind to their relatives, neighbours, and friends, we should ask very confidently whether whim and caprice be not visibly prevalent amidst that kindness—whether it may not be perceived to be uniformly subordinate to a decided selfishness—and whether slight causes are not enough to convert it into resentment and violence. We have not the smallest faith in the benevolence or friendship of a man who, in a journey to see his friends or nearest relatives, (if they are not dangerously ill or in any other extremity) will have a pair of jaded post-horses forced to their utmost speed, or will whip and spur to the same painful exertion a poor hired hack, or a hard-worked animal of his own, just to reach his friends as he calls them, an hour or two the sooner.

Unless a somewhat comprehensive view is taken of the evil as it is actually existing, under these several forms,—a vast and diversified portion of suffering needlessly and often wantonly inflicted—a dreadful measure of crime in some sense *sanctioned*—and a hardening operation on the moral feelings—a man can have no just idea of the strength of the reasons for which the friends of humanity wish for some such interposition of authority as this speech was made to prevent; and he may let Mr. Windham persuade him that the evil, existing indeed in no very serious degree in this country (for so the orator had the hardihood to represent) is not of a kind to make it worth while to encounter the difficulties

incident to the execution of a law for its repression. But those difficulties will probably appear to form very insufficient arguments against making at least a *trial* of such a law, to a man of enlarged benevolence even though of less than poetic sensibility, if he takes an extensive view of the cruelties of which *he* will easily verify the existence.

One of the chief of those arguments is from the exceptionable character of a discretionary jurisdiction. It is however observed expressly by himself that "such jurisdictions must of necessity perhaps exist in many cases, and, where the necessity can be shown, must be submitted to,"—though, as he justly adds, "they are not on that account the less to be deprecated, or more fit to be adopted where their establishment must be matter of choice." p. 14. Now, a very humane man may be allowed to think, that if the class of crimes in question cannot be brought under the coercion requisite to prevent or punish without such a jurisdiction, there cannot be "many cases" in which a stronger necessity can be proved. And let it be considered that the magistracy appointed for the purpose would have a province which, taken in the whole, would be far more defined than that of almost any other constituted authority; its peculiar nature marking it off so distinctly from all other departments and subjects of jurisdiction. While therefore there might be *within* this department various difficulties of discrimination, and consequently some errors committed, those difficulties and errors would inconveniently affect the community only to a certain very limited length: the tribunal for cruelty to animals would have nothing to do, for instance, with *jacobinism*—with charges or questions about which Mr. Windham was peculiarly anxious that the good people of England should never be harassed. These tribunals would in their commencement, it may be presumed, proceed with solicitous deliberation; and thus a number of well-judged decisions would become at once an useful precedent to themselves, and a promulgation to the people of the rules intended to be observed in such cases as the law could not have

specifically provided for: so that a little time would do away a considerable part of the evil represented by Mr. Windham as an inseparable attendant, and justly deprecated so far as it is an inseparable attendant, on the discretionary application of a general law—that is, its “requiring men to live by an unknown rule,” and “inflicting pains and penalties upon conditions which no man is able previously to ascertain.” A short series of the proclaimed and compared adjudgments of a few of the tribunals, might easily give the people at the very least as settled a standard of the degrees and penalties of this class of offences, as that with which they are furnished respecting the various other classes by our criminal code; a code of which so vast a proportion of the enactments are considered by the authorities administering the law as totally unfit to be enforced—and which therefore leaves so very large a part of the general administration of justice to be purely an exercise of that very discretion which the orator affects so much to dread. It is obvious, too, that the danger which in relation to this one subject he insists on so much,—of the judges being influenced by passion, may just as properly be urged against that exceedingly wide and unquestioned discretion in our criminal courts. But the danger of the judges being impelled by passion to decisions of excessive severity, will appear exceedingly small when the very low general state of our moral sentiments regarding the sufferings of animals, is taken into account; even cultivated men, as we have seen, often betraying a strange want of sensibility on this point. Indeed Mr. Windham himself, in another part of the speech, represents that if it were not so, the desired reform might be affected without the interference of the legislature. Unless it were to be expected that our English gentlemen, as soon as they felt themselves invested with their new office, should melt into a most unwonted kind of sympathy, the probability would be that the offenders cited before them might escape somewhat too easily; and that, speaking generally, the judges would only become adequately severe, through an enlargement of their vir-

tuous feelings, which would at the same time make them anxious to be just in that severity.

It is not to be denied, that the appointed courts or magistrates would have occasion for their utmost discrimination to ascertain the true nature of the acts charged before them—to distinguish wanton cruelty from impositions, or inflictions necessitated by unavoidable circumstances—to obtain proof *who* is the real or chief offender—and to discern when an accuser may be guilty of malicious misrepresentation. But Lord Erskine has shown that all this is perfectly analogous to what forms a very large share of the ordinary business of the courts of law, in which the prosecutions for cruel treatment of apprentices, for assaults, for slander, for trespasses, &c. &c., involve exactly the same sort of difficulties. He will not, indeed, allow them to be called difficulties; declaring for himself, with an appeal to the experience also of his learned brethren, that he has known hardly any causes of this nature in which the truth did not very soon make itself palpable to the court. And since, in the course of so many causes, perplexity, fallacy, and malice, under all their imaginable modes, have generally failed to embarrass the court for any long time, it is very reasonably inferred that in cases of alleged cruelty to animals it cannot generally be impossible to ascertain the truth. To be sure, the keenness of Westminster Hall cannot be spread all over the country, and conferred on each magistrate along with his patent of office: but it must not be conceded to Mr. Windham's implied judgment of the faculties of our English gentlemen, that they would not be able, with the accuser, the accused, and the witnesses, before them in open day light—and very often before dinner—to make a tolerable estimate of the characters and the statements; when they had looks, tones, narratives, replies to all the questions they chose to put, sometimes the injured animals, and often the known characters of the persons, all placed fairly in their view. A very few exposed and stigmatized instances of malicious accusation, or purely impertinent consequential interference, would go far towards putting an end to that kind of

injustice; as none but the most worthless persons in a neighbourhood, persons who may be easily *known* for such, would be willing to expose themselves to be convicted of it. With Lord Erskine, therefore, we think that on the whole the proposed law is "more open to the charge of inefficacy than of vexation."

But the objection on which the most zealous part of Mr. Windham's oratory is employed, is the iniquitous distinction which, he asserts, any law of the kind would practically make, and which the law, as laid down in the proposed bill, does formally make, between the rich and the poor. It was perfectly in character that on this topic our statesman should take fire; and on the present occasion it burns so fiercely as to threaten the whole constitution of parliament:—for his speech declares, that though he had been, from conviction, a steady opponent of parliamentary reform, the passing of the proposed law would be enough to reverse all his opinions, and decide him for a grand change in the constitution of the House of Commons. Part of this inequality which he predicts in the operation of the law, is the failure of its execution against the rich in cases strictly analogous to those in which it would be executed against the lower orders. Now though it is truly an odious thing in a community, that the rich should be tolerated in vices which are punished in the poor, yet a moralist may be allowed to wish that the atrocious vices may be extirpated from among the poor, even though the rich should resolve, as their own peculiar privilege, to retain them. And, since jurisdiction must always be substantially in the hands of the more wealthy class, we would rather, upon the whole, that the very "squire" who last week, "rode his hunter to death" in a fox-chace, and on whom, notwithstanding, the law against cruelty would, according to Mr. Windham, fail to be executed, should be the magistrate to punish a man of the "lower orders" for forcing a poor debilitated horse along with a cart-load of stones, of double the reasonable weight, till it falls down and can rise no more,—than that this and other similar barbarians should be allowed to do this again. What would

become of law and justice in general, if we were to be nice about the characters of thief-takers and executioners? It might, indeed, be hoped, one should think, that some few "squires" might be found in the different parts of England, who do *not* ride their hunters to death, and who, if in office, would be found to have the temerity to execute the law against those squires that do. It might also be thought not totally romantic, especially in humble innocents like us, unacquainted with the wealthy and the genteel people of the land, to hope that the squire, who has probably been educated at the university, and has the clergyman to dine with him every week, would, when invested with a commission to enforce authoritatively among his neighbours, both a specific rule and a general *principle* against cruelty—bethink himself of the propriety of not perpetrating notorious cruelties himself, in the form of either riding his hunter, or causing a pair of post-horses to be driven, to death. But still, if such surmises and hopes are founded in a perfect ignorance of the character of the wealthy, polished, college-bred gentlemen of this country; if we *must* be compelled to accept Mr. Windham's implied estimate of them; and if, therefore, it would be in vain to seek for any of them to be constituted magistrates to take cognizance of cruelty who would not perpetrate the grossest cruelties themselves—still even though all this were so, we would rather that only one cruelty should be committed than that ten should; and would allow the wealthy and cultivated men to commit one, as a reward for the exercise of their humanity in preventing the other nine.

It is at the same time extremely mortifying to patriotic feelings of a better kind than those of mere English pride, to have from so acute an observer, and so indulgent a moralist as Mr. Windham, such a testimony against the humanity of the more cultivated class of our countrymen and countrywomen, as is conveyed in the substance of this speech. The orator most pointedly insists that if they really had any tolerable share of the humanity to which it is pretended this law is designed to give efficacy,

they might give it efficacy without the assistance of such a law. And in exculpation of the immediate agents of cruelty, such post-boys, and even the proprietors of post-horses, he drives home the charge—a charge of much severer quality, in fact, than there are any expressions to indicate it was in his opinion—to the superior agent and criminal, “his honour” for whose sake the cruelty is committed.

“Whose fault is it, in nineteen cases out of twenty, that these sufferings are incurred? The traveller drives up in haste, his servant having half-killed one post-horse in riding forward to announce his approach. The horses are brought out; they are weak, spavined, galled, hardly dry from their last stage. What is the dialogue that ensues? Does the traveller offer to stop on his journey, or even to wait till the horses can be refreshed? Such a thought never enters his head; he swears at the landlord and threatens never to come again to his house, because he expects to go only seven miles an hour, when he had hoped to go nine. But when the landlord has assured him that the horses, however bad in their appearance, will carry his honour very well, and has directed the ‘lads’ to ‘make the best of their way,’ the traveller’s humanity is satisfied, and he hears with perfect composure and complacency the cracking whips of the postillions, only intimating to them, by-the-bye, that if they do not bring him in in time, they shall not receive a farthing.”—p. 21.

This supposed instance was undoubtedly meant and considered by Mr. Windham as a fair sample of the humane feelings prevailing in that part of society of which the individuals are of consequence enough to be preceded and announced, in their movements, by servants on horses “half-killed” to execute the important office; and it is mortifying to be compelled to acknowledge that, whatever else be ascribed or denied to Mr. Windham, it would be ridiculous to question his knowledge of the world. But it is really very curious that such a description should form part of a serious argument against a law for the prevention of cruelty. How does he apply such a fact to such a purpose? It is thus. He is representing that “those persons of the lower orders” who would most commonly be found the immediate perpetrators of cruelty, especially of the kind here described, are very much at the will of their betters, such as “his honour,” and actually commit much of the alleged cruelty at their authoritative dictate; and that,

therefore if "his honour," and such as his honour, chose to alter their will and dictates in this matter, they could, without any interference of the law, prevent that cruelty. Why yes; and, with submission, it may perhaps be questioned whether the necessity of a law in any case whatever is not owing precisely to the circumstance that people have *not* the will to do right without it. "His honour" is evidently not disposed to save the legislature the odium and the pain of exerting their power—a power so rarely and reluctantly exerted—of enacting one more restrictive and penal statute. "But then," says Mr. Windham "since 'his honour' is in this case the real *cause* of the cruelty (while yet, not being the direct perpetrator, he cannot be touched by the law), you will commit a flagrant injustice in making a law to punish the landlord and the post-boy." To this it must be replied, that without a law directed against the landlord and post-boy, we cannot, according to Mr. Windham's own statement of the case, reach "his honour," to put a restraint on his detestable barbarity; and that by means of such a law we can put that restraint. For if the landlord has just received an authenticated copy of a heavy penal statute against cruelties like those here described, he will be very certain not to suffer the poor horses under such circumstances, to be goaded out of his stable, however "his honour" may storm and "swear." And if this important gentleman, baronet, or lord, as the case may be, should threaten to go to another inn, the landlord will laugh, and tell him that the statute is probably in equal force at the other inn. And also when the "lads" set off, the landlord will warn them that it is at their peril they take their consequential luggage at any such rate as "nine miles an hour," in whatever style the said luggage may command, growl, or threaten. As to his threatening them with "not a farthing," it is obvious that one point to be provided for in the proposed legal regulation would be that, at any rate the *whole* of their reward should not depend on the choice of the traveller who would proportion its degree upward exactly to the degree of cruelty.—We should think the proprietor of the horses would be ex-

ceedingly glad of this statute, as the best protection of himself and his horses against the imperative insolence of such persons as "his honour." If he has retained the very slightest sentiment of what we, by courtesy to our nature, are pleased to call humanity, or if he has any reasonable care of the animals, even as mere working machines, which it cannot be good policy, as to his own pecuniary interest, to work down and destroy so fast, he will be happy to plead the inhibition of this statute; if he can be so perverse a wretch as to be indifferent at once to the sufferings of the animals and the calculation of his own advantage, he will *deserve* to stand the sole respondent, for all the cruelty committed between the traveller and the post-boy, and to suffer the utmost punishment awarded by the law.—To notice again that one landlord would have no inducement to comply with the unreasonable demands of travellers on the ground of competition of interests with other landlords, whom our orator's argument supposes ready to give the barbarous accommodation which this one might refuse; would be very superfluous but for the gross unfairness, as to this point, of the passage we have quoted—and of another, (p. 18) in which the traveller is represented as "hinting to the post-boy that he means to dine at the next stage, and that if he does not bring him in in time, he will never go to his master's house again." The acute maker of this speech saw clearly, that his threatened transfer of custom from one proprietor of post-horses to another, was the essential basis of his argument against the application of a penal law to that proprietor. His interest, our orator argues, necessitates him to be servile and cruel, since by disobliging the traveller he would lose employment—the traveller instantly and ever after going to another inn, where no such humane regulations will retard him. Now what words can do justice to the mockery of maintaining an apparently serious argument on a ground so palpably taken from under the reasoner by the nature of the case? It being unavoidably present to his thoughts at the time, and it having been put in the most pointed form of words in Lord Erskine's

printed speech, that such competition and transfers must be precluded by a law known to be equally restrictive on all the owners of post-horses. Can there be two places in England where a man could talk in this way without laughing out at his audience for gravely listening to him.

In prosecuting his argument, that people of wealth and rank might, if they pleased, do much without the assistance of law, for the prevention of cruelty, the orator bestows some poignant sarcasms on hypocritical pretensions to sensibility; and he will be cheered with animation by those who are in earnest for that prevention, at each vindictive sentence applied to such personages as those described in the following passages.

"One of the favourite instances [in exemplification of cruelty] in the fashionable female circles, as they are called, of this town, (and who appear, by the bye, to have been very diligently canvassed,) are the cases with which the members of these societies have been continually shocked, of coachmen whipping their horses in public places; one instance, by the way, by no means of magnitude enough to call for the interference of the legislature. But be its magnitude what it will, why must the legislature be called in? Are there no means (sufficient probably for punishing the offence adequately in each instance, but certainly for preventing the practice) in the power possessed by masters and mistresses! But apply to any of these ladies, and satisfy them, after much difficulty, that *their* coachman was the most active and the most in the wrong, in the struggle, which caused so much disturbance at the last Opera, and the answer probably would be; 'Oh! to be sure it is very shocking; but then John is so clever in a crowd! the other night at Lady Such-a-one's, when all the world were perishing in the passage, waiting for their carriages, ours was up in an instant, and we were at Mrs. Such-a-one's half an hour before any one else. We should not know what to do if we were to part with him.' Was it the coachman here who most deserved punishment, or was it for the parties here described to call for a law?"—p. 19.

In an assembly of confessedly unequalled rank in point of integrity, there evidently could not be a more effectual way for putting a question in a train for speedy decision, than by stating it so that the decision, as on the one side or on the other, shall appear to be identical with the honesty or the hypocrisy of that assembly. Our orator therefore has put his grand objection against the

law as proposed by Lord Erskine,—its making an invidious and iniquitous distinction between the higher and lower orders, into this *argumentum ad hominem* form. The bill, he represents to the assembly, not merely proposes certain specific laws against certain specified modes of cruelty, but promulgates a grand abstract principle against cruelty to animals in general. Well: what are usually called sports, such as hunting, shooting, and fishing, are as decidedly of the nature of cruelty as any thing in the world can be, and therefore “cannot, one should think (we are using his own words) be allowed an instant; as being, more than any others, in the very line and point-blank aim of the statute, and having nothing to protect them but that which ought in justice and decency to be the strongest reason against them; namely, that they are the mere sports of the rich.” But, behold! this bill, founding itself, and taking to itself the highest credit for being founded, on this grand general principle, leaves and sanctions the rich in the most perfect possession of all these cruel sports. And who is it that is to pass this bill into a law? Why, says he, “a house of hunters and shooters:” and after suggesting to them what a fine figure their legislation would make in the world, when the newspapers should come to record in one column a string of commitments under the “Cruelty Bill,” and in another, all the savage incidents of a desperate chace, under the head of “Sporting intelligence,” he exclaims,

“Was it possible that men could stand the shame of such statements,—that this house which tolerated such sports, nay which claimed them, as the peculiar privilege of the class to which it belonged, a house of hunters and shooters, should, while they left these untouched, be affecting to take the brute creation under their protection; and be passing bills for the punishment of every carter or driver, whom an angry passenger should accuse of chastising his horses with over severity.” “It was in vain to attempt to disguise the fact, that if, with such a preamble (as Lord Erskine’s) on our statutes, and with acts passed in consequence to punish the lower classes for any cruelty inflicted upon animals, we continued to practise and to reserve in a great measure to ourselves the sports of hunting, shooting, and fishing, we must exhibit ourselves as the most hardened and unblushing hypocrites that ever shocked the feelings of mankind.”—pp. 25, 26.

With great dexterity and success this assailant of the new scheme of legislation cuts away the line of distinction, by which Lord Erskine had endeavoured to save the decorum of the legislature, while it should be excluding a large proportion of the animal tribes from the protection of a bill professing to proceed on a *general* principle of humanity, by calling those excluded animals the "unreclaimed," or *feræ naturæ*. "Why," says Mr. Windham, "because they did not ask man's protection, were they to be liable in consequence to be persecuted and tormented by him? On the contrary, if he did nothing for their good, he ought the rather to be required to do nothing for their harm." It was in truth a matter of no small perplexity, in proposing a solemn legislative recognition of a principle condemning cruelty to animals in general, to explain to the persons who were to make this recognition, how they might do it in perfect consistency with the retention of a legal right to seek *sport* in the infliction of pain. Perhaps on this part of the subject the mover of the bill was less fully prepared than on the other parts, to meet that extreme moral scrupulosity, which he could not be unaware he should find awake to every point of consistency. We really do not see how the proposition could be better introduced than in some such manner as the following.—"There is a great deal of cruelty exercised on brute animals in this country, which we certainly have the power in some degree to prevent; and I will endeavour to show that it is therefore our duty to do so. If, however, we adopt a formal measure on the subject, the assertion of something in the form of a general principle condemnatory of cruelty, seems highly proper as the basis of any particular enactments, and may also be useful by exciting thought and impressing the moral sense. Then as to the particular enactments, let us try how many we can agree upon. You and I know very well that the pursuits of the sportsman are extremely cruel; but you and I also know very well that it would be utterly in vain for me to propose to this assembly any restrictions on those sports. I am sorry for the appearance of inconsistency that will arise

from this exception, especially as it is an exception made so insidiously in your own favour. But in a matter so urgent, it is better that something should be done, with whatever defects or inconsistency, than that nothing should. I think the enormous sum of pain that may be prevented by such regulations as we probably might concur to make, a far more important consideration, than the uniformity of the character of our legislation. Retain, if it must be so, your asserted right and your practice of hunting, shooting, and fishing; but pray do not go to fancy it an indispensable point of beneficence to the people, to secure to *them* also an inviolable unlimited privilege to be cruel, in another way."

It remains only to make one slight observation on the sort of consistency so carefully maintained in this speech between the professions of regret for the sufferings of animals, and certain other professions. Near the beginning of this article, we called these compassionate professions *cant*—whether justly or not, will appear immediately. After adverting to Lord Erskine's melancholy exhibition of cruelties and victims, (an exhibition in a great measure confined to horses, asses, and cattle, appointed for slaughter,) our orator, as we have seen, most strenuously insists, that the cruelties perpetrated by the vulgar on these animals are equalled, if not exceeded, by those that take place in the aristocratic amusements of hunting, &c. &c. Of course the senator expects it to be understood that he regrets also the sufferings of the victims of these amusements. But lest there should be the possibility of a doubt as to his feelings in this case, he takes care to say that,

"He *begged* not to be understood as *condemning* the sports to which he had been alluding, and *much less* as charging with cruelty all those who took delight in them, cruel as the acts themselves undoubtedly were." "Though no sportsman himself, he should lament the day, should it ever arrive, when from false refinement and mistaken humanity, what are called field-sports, (or sports indeed of almost *any* kind) should be abolished in this country, or fall into disuse. So far from arraigning those who followed them, his doctrine had ever been, that strange as it might seem, *cruel sports did not make cruel people*."—p. 27.

We are, if possible, more pleased than even any of our

readers will be, to have reached the end of these observations. Nothing could have made us feel it pardonable to extend them so disproportionately, and so very far beyond the first intention, but the notorious fact, that the important branch of morality to which they relate, is not only disregarded in practice, by numberless reputable sort of members of the community, but also very criminally neglected in the instruction of parents, tutors, and preachers. It seemed worth while to examine a little, how far the persons so practising, and so neglecting, would do wisely to seek to draw any thing like sanction or extenuation from the opinions of the departed senator, or the decisions of the assembly in which this speech purports to have been delivered.

[December, 1810.]

The Fall of Cambria, a Poem. By JOSEPH COTTLE. 12mo.

OUR times are unfavourable, to the last degree, to the writers of that kind of poetry commonly called epic ; a denomination about which there has been, among critics, a vast deal of superstition—a denomination as fairly applicable, for what any of them can show to the contrary, to any poetical narration of the great military transactions that have decided the destiny of a state, as to the Iliad—a denomination, therefore, which might with perfect propriety have appeared in the title-page of this work, had the author deemed it worth while to be tenacious of so trifling a point of rank. The present times, we observe, are unfavourable, because a great part of the impressive power of the heroic poem obviously depends on the contrast between such transactions as it narrates, and the ordinary course of human events. We have very naturally been accustomed to calculate the effect of this sort of poem, on an assumption that the fall of great states and monarchs, the extinction and creation of imperial dynasties, the exploits of great heroes, and such conflicts of armies as transfer whole nations to a new dominion, are things of so rare occurrence as to be of themselves adapted to take possession of the utmost faculty of attention and wonder, and therefore to need nothing but the eloquence of poetry to give them an overpowering magnificence. In their plainest mode of representation they must rise before our view, it is presumed, with somewhat of the aspect of sublime mountains : the effect of their appearing in poetry will be as when those mountains are seen in the state of volcanoes. But this high advantage of the epic poem—its having the province of celebrating a class of events

which, in even the humblest style of recital, would be exceedingly striking to the imagination—is, along with so many other high and prescriptive things, totally abolished in the present age. The fall of monarchs, the end of a royal race, the catastrophe of empires—what solemn phrases these used to be in the lessons of moralists, and the declamations of orators! How many pensive and awful reflections were they expected to awaken! To what a remote, and lofty, and tragical order of ideas were we supposed to be aspiring when we uttered them! But the time is at length come for such ambitious phrases to express but the ordinary events taking place within our sight. We are now become accustomed to reckon with great confidence, at the beginning of the year, that if we live to the end of it, we shall outlive some one or other ancient kingdom that is co-existing with us on the first of January. We take not the smallest credit for any unusual foresight in the prognostication; and when the event accordingly takes place, it seems so much a matter of course that it should have happened, that it is not till after a considerable interval of reflection that the mind admits any very grave impression of its importance. The impression is not so much made by the event itself directly, as by our reflective wonder that it has impressed us so little. But both our direct and our reflective ideas of the magnitude of such an event are soon swept away by that incessant rapid progress of revolution, which is overturning another and still another throne; destroying the boundaries of states; either reducing those states to the condition of provinces of one vast rapacious empire, or supplanting their ancient institutions by new forms and names of government, and consigning the hereditary monarchs and their courts to obscurity and captivity, or driving them to the extremities and islands of Europe, or even to the other hemisphere. In this career of revolution, war has unfolded all its splendid and terrible forms, in such a crowded succession of enterprises and battles, with every imaginable circumstance of valour, skill, and destruction, that its grandest exhibitions are

become familiar to us, almost to insipidity. We read or talk, over our wine or our coffee, of some great battle that has recently decided the fate of a kingdom, with an emotion nearly as transient as of an old bridge carried away in our neighbourhood by a flood, or a tree overthrown by the wind or struck with lightning. It is, even after every allowance for the natural effect of iteration and familiarity, perfectly astonishing to observe what a degree of indifference has come to prevail in the general mind, at the view of events the most awful in their immediate exhibition, and the most portentous as to their consequences.

Now it is very evident that this state of the public mind must be unfriendly in the extreme, as we began by asserting, to the labours and hopes of epic poets. It is the chief object of their unfortunate task to excite the sentiments of awe and astonishment by the representation of events, for the most part, of greatly inferior magnitude to those (of the very same class) which are just sufficing to keep up our newspapers and annual registers to the competent pitch for amusing us. It is true that the poets, by going back several ages for their subjects, have the advantage of exhibiting their heroes and great transactions with that venerable aspect of antiquity which is strangely imposing to the imagination; but this is more than counterbalanced in favour of the newspapers by the momentous and direct relation of the present events to our own interests. The facts, too, of the epic narrative, instead of occupying the mind so as to withdraw its attention from the present events, have a quite contrary operation, tending rather to reflect its thoughts back to these nearer and greater objects. And this reflected attention involves comparison: which we shall be sure to make with a considerable degree of disposition to find the transactions of our own more magnificent than those of former ages. We shall thus be made to contemplate with more attention, and, through a kind of reacting pride, with more admiration, the events of the last year or month, in consequence of the poet's challenging us with a pompous display of the battles and revolutions

of remote periods ; so that not only we are likely to behave ill to contemporary epic poets, but even Homer himself has need of all the sanctity of antiquity, and all the surrounding throngs of devotees of every time and nation, to protect him against the pert profaneness with which we might be tempted to ask, "Where are all your conflicts on the Phrygian plain, and what is the fall of Troy, compared with what is taking place in our times about once every six months?" The author, then, of the "Fall of Cambria" will not be surprised to find himself partaking in some measure the misfortune which a revolutionary period has brought on poets, by rendering what were once accounted the most inspiring subjects vulgar and almost insipid.

If this diminution of the interest of heroic poetry had taken place from any *other* cause, it would not perhaps have been regretted by a Christian moralist, who feels it quite time that the characters and actions which are so pernicious in fact, should cease to be attractive in description. The moral effect of exhibiting martial excellence in an attractive form would be very equivocal, even in a case with the best imaginable conditions. Some of these conditions would be, that the contest should bear the clear evidence of perfect justice on the one side, and therefore iniquity on the other ; that the defenders of the just cause should fight purely from the love of justice, not from military glory, as it is called ; that the chiefs among these defenders should have so much general virtue, that their valour in a just cause should not be the means of seducing us into a partiality for some vice in another part of the character ; and that the perhaps equally valiant combatants on the side of injustice should be so represented as to become, by means of the other parts of their characters, or from the fact of their being on the side of injustice, so decidedly the objects of antipathy, that their bravery, however splendid, should conduce nothing towards conciliating us to the bad men, and the bad cause. It is doubtful whether a careful observance of all these conditions, in a poem which should describe with the most animated eloquence (as it

might, without violating these conditions,) the most brilliant achievements of war, would be enough to prevent those achievements, so described, from exciting a feeling of more complacency towards the work of destruction than ought *ever* to be entertained towards it,—than it would be strictly moral to entertain towards it even in a case in which it should be attended with all conceivable circumstances of justice. But if the moral influence on the reader's mind, from a grand poetical celebration of heroes and heroic exploits, with even perfect justice on their side, a celebration, too, conducted with a strict regard to all the other conditions above suggested, would be at the best equivocal, it is quite needless to ask, what must naturally be the influence on his mind from the celebration of such wars as have actually made the grandest figure in poetry,—which poetry has, at the same time, violated all the conditions on which it might be just barely pardonable to display *any*, even the most righteous war, in attractive colours.

From the general character of Mr. Cottle's writing, we should conclude with confidence, that no poet ever had a higher respect for the purest principles of morality. There is strong evidence of this in the present performance. But the subject, like almost all such subjects, involved difficulties which no dexterity could overcome. Was the subjugation of Wales by Edward the First a just or an unjust achievement? If a just one, then our feelings are engaged pointedly against justice by our sympathetic interest in the heroic and amiable character of the Welsh Prince Llewellyn, and some of his associates, and the patriotic and enthusiastic energy of the people. If it was unjust—if it was an enterprise of wicked ambition in the monarch, and wicked loyalty in his chiefs, then it is an immoral lenity that we are tempted to exercise towards these workers of iniquity, by the magnanimity and generosity which the poet frequently makes them display. It is true, he has made some of the English leaders very detestable characters; but still, the characters of the men and the enterprise are not so managed on the whole as to inspire such an entire detestation of

the undertaking throughout, as we ought to feel *if* it was an iniquitous undertaking. Perhaps indeed the poet felt, and perhaps justly felt, that it would be accounted an unpardonable violation of courtesy and patriotism, to offer to English readers a work which, in celebrating a great national achievement, should represent our own country as atrociously in the wrong. But it is a striking disadvantage in the choice of a subject, that either justice must be compromised on the one hand, or a sentiment so invincible, and accounted so virtuous, as patriotism, systematically affronted on the other. We speak on the supposition of the English being, in the instance in question, completely in the wrong.—It is another serious disadvantage of the present subject, that how much soever the English invasion may appear to be in the wrong, it is evidently to the advantage of both the nations that it should be *successful*, this being the only event that could for ever put an end to their wars, and to the savage condition of their border territory; and this also promising to the minor nation incalculable advantages in point of progressive knowledge and civilization. Thus a civil war is raised among our feelings, some of which are imprecating discomfiture and punishment on the invader for his ambition, while others are desiring his success in order to the final pacification of two fiercely conflicting nations, whose strife, it is perfectly evident, will otherwise be cruel and perpetual, and in order to the civil improvement of the aggrieved state. The poet interests us at every step for the success of Llewellyn, over whose final defeat and whose death we are compelled to mourn, as over the fall of a virtuous hero, and a just cause, detesting the royal arm that inflicted the fatal blow: and yet this sympathy is confounded by our being compelled equally to reflect, that the life and victory which we wish him, would have been, on the wider scale of humanity, a far greater disaster.

Against the radical vice of epic poetry, its giving a pernicious fascination to the exploits of war, Mr. Cottle has evidently laboured earnestly, by endeavouring to throw as much of the interest as possible into the

subordinate parts of the fable, and by occupying an unusually large proportion of the work with speeches of the principal personages. Still more directly he has done it by taking occasions to introduce, formally, many solemn reflections on the essential hatefulness of war, and the vanity of those martial qualities and feats, to which, however, he will in vain admonish those whom Christianity in vain admonishes, of the folly of applying such terms as glory and immortality. It may be from the meritorious singularity of sentiments in perfect unison with the highest moral and Christian principles, in a poem celebrating the exploits of heroes, that we are tempted to consider these passages as the best, in every sense, in the work.

* * * * *

There is a great deal to be praised in this poem. The moral spirit of it, so far as the general exceptions we have before made do not interfere, is singularly excellent; faithful to the supreme authority of religion, and favourable to every thing amiable and dignified. The serious and pensive reflections which form a prominent distinction of the work, are often of a kind which the wisest men are most inclined to indulge. They sometimes reach a no small degree of abstraction; they indicate a deep sensibility, and an extremely attentive observance of its varying emotions. The narration will not perhaps be thought sufficiently rapid, but is generally very clear. The speeches will be thought much too long, notwithstanding that they are employed a good deal in carrying on the narration. Taking the narration as a whole, it is in a somewhat more settled form, perhaps, than is required in a standard epic; but probably the author might consider himself as privileged in virtue of declining that proud title, to allow himself in a looser arrangement of his facts, and a more digressive and episodical mode of relating them. He holds himself always at liberty to protract the story of any collateral course of transactions as long as it will furnish good materials for poetry. Yet we think that most of these collateral narrations will be found tending

towards the main purpose of the story; like streams which, while wandering in distinct and even distant fields or vallies, are still winding towards a confluence. At the same time the fable has much of the simplicity of history; not attempting the intricacy and artifice of construction which distract the reader's attention between the bearings of the plot, and the intrinsic quality of the successive portions of the composition, and which make so much of the interest of the work depend on curiosity, that, when once that is satisfied, the work becomes comparatively an object of indifference.—Mr. Cottle never scruples to suspend the course of events to dilate on the moral reflections they have suggested; or to give time for a lengthened lyrical performance by the bards Caradoc or Lhyrarch, (which will not be considered as among the best parts of the work;) or to describe those grand or beautiful scenes of nature, which these descriptions prove the author to have contemplated with a fixed silent attention, a perception of something deeper than shades and colours, a reflective mysticism, if we may so call it, and a recognition of an all-pervading spirit. No doubt some of the ideas suggested amidst the imaginative musing, will appear strained and bordering on conceits, but many are within the laws of just analogy, while ingenious and subtle. Examples of both are found in Lhyrarch's "Song of the Ocean." The poet has given great variety to his descriptions, by taking full advantage of the romantic scenery in Wales; as well as of the picturesque array of war and fashion of manners in a chivalrous age. As to characters, there is such an enormous multitude of heroes going up and down throughout all literature, as to have rendered the heroic character familiar to the imagination, and to make it comparatively easy for the poet, to exhibit his personages in the correct general shape and features of this character, both in its more generous and its more ferocious form. Along with this success of general delineation, we think our author has reached the higher point of giving to heroes substantially of the same order, an individual complexion of character by which, for instance,

Edward, Warwick, and Llewellyn, are clearly discriminated from one another. The Cambrian prince especially is strikingly distinguished by tenderness and enthusiasm. A high degree of this latter quality is made to distinguish the Cambrians in general from their invaders; and to the predominance of this quality the strains of the bards are made materially to conduce.—The poet's language is wrought with care, and is in general equally removed from meanness and classical pomp; but sometimes, apparently to avoid the latter, is suffered to sink into a certain degree of feebleness. The versification has a sufficient variety of pauses, and a prevailing smoothness and facility.

[*March and April*, 1811.]

The Curse of Kehama. By ROBERT SOUTHEY. 4to.

IN endeavouring to come as near as we can to a right judgment on this performance, it will perhaps be best to let a brief abstract of the story precede the substance of the remarks we may venture to make. If they should happen to intermingle with this analysis more than we at present intend, we shall only be so much the less tedious in the latter part of the article.

It may first be noticed, that the *time* in which the events forming the action of the poem took place, is not brought within the reach of conjecture, by any circumstances bearing a relation to any known period of history. The action bursts on us without introduction or preparation, proceeds in perfect disconnexion from all contemporary agency, and in a moment shuts up, in a manner that not only does not leave a possibility of guessing at a sequel, but gives the impression that there can *be* no sequel. The magnificent and monstrous fable comes up to our view and goes down again, just after the manner of one of those temporary islands, which have been sometimes thrown up by submarine volcanoes, and having risen with tremendous violence and fulmination, and exhibited a fiery and portentous appearance for a short time, have sunk at once, and left all the space mere sea, as it was before. Indeed the story, though consisting, for perhaps the greater part, in a representation of human action and feelings, is so perfectly foreign to any thing actually and simply human, that there would have been absurdity in affecting to connect it with real events, and to give it a place in chronology. It is enough for the reader to be certain as to the two extreme dates of the period, somewhere in which these

matters happened. The crimes and miseries here described, are evidence that the transactions related must have taken place within the *Cali-yuga*, the fourth or iron age of the Hindoos, which commenced about five thousand years ago; and it should be equally evident, we think, that they cannot have taken place so lately as the middle of the last century; certainly not since the battle of Plassey; because it is impossible that such a person as Kehama should have been in India at that time, without coming in collision with Colonel Clive, who would have saved Seeva the trouble of interfering to put him down.

The poem opens with a grand funeral procession through the streets of the "imperial city," supposed to be in some part of Hindostan, and the capital of the dominions of Kehama, who bears the apparently inadequate denomination of "Rajah." It was the funeral of Arvalan, his son, who, in attempting violence to the beautiful and virtuous daughter of a peasant, had been struck dead at one blow, inflicted in the agony of desperation by her father. The procession which conveys and attends the dead miscreant to the pile prepared without the city, is very long, is in the night, has the gloomy splendour of an almost infinite number of torches, roars and clatters with a dreadful noise of all manner of vociferation, from the whole vast multitude combined with all big-sounding instruments, and is described with eminent vigour of conception and language; an effectual hint of which may be given, by citing the lines descriptive of the appearance of the dead prince.

"In vain ye thunder on his ear the name!
 Would ye awake the dead?
 Borne upright in his palankeen,
 There Arvalan is seen!
 A glow is on his face, ... a lively red;
 It is the crimson canopy
 Which o'er his cheek the reddening shade hath shed.
 He moves, ... he nods his head, ...
 But the motion comes from the bearers' tread,
 As the body, borne aloft in state,
 Sways with the impulse of its own dead weight."—p. 4.

Kehama comes in view, for the first time, following immediately his dead son, but not calling his name, nor joining the funeral song. With great propriety he is made to be silent, abstracted from the tumult, pomp, and thundering clamour, and grimly occupied with his own thoughts; while the beholders were secretly gratified to see their tyrant a sufferer, and not one person in all the prodigious multitude really lamented the fate of his son. After him come the two wives of Arvalan, "young Azla," and "young Nealliny," prepared, the one voluntarily, the other by constraint, to share with him the burning pile. They are attended by their relations, and followed by a train of richly decorated slaves, the appointed victims of the same fire. The two persons that come next, guarded by bowmen, are the objects of most extreme curiosity, and the only objects of sympathy, to the spectators. These are the peasant and his daughter, named, in a taste sufficiently odd, Ladurlad and Kailyal. The procession, reaches the bank of the river; the bier is set down near the funeral pile, which is built of sandal wood, and bestrewed with myrrh and ambergris; the music and outcry cease; a ceremony is performed in the way of ascertaining that the body is really dead; it is absolutely dead; then

—"with a doubling peal and deeper blast
The tambours and the trumpets sound on high,
And with a last and loudest cry
They call on Arvalan."

Azla calmly takes her seat on the funeral pile, and sustains the head of Arvalan in her lap: Nealliny, who has not yet been one month a bride, is forced to the fatal situation, and bound to the dead man, in spite of her struggles, the desperate agony of which is described with a frightful vividness. Kehama's torch, followed by those of the Brahmins, sets fire to the pile, which is built in a kind of pit, so as to be below the level of the ground; the band of victims join in a frantic dance round it, and one by one fall into the devouring flames.

The clamour and instruments of the furious rout at length sink into silence, and leave the roaring of the fire alone to be heard.

Amidst this stillness, more hideous than even the preceding tempest of noise and madness, Kehama performs alone, some funeral rights, and calls on his son. Unexpectedly Arvalan answers and appears to him, but in such a manner as to be unheard and unseen by any one else. They hold a mournful and infernal dialogue. The son expostulates upbraidingly with his father, whom the poet makes him call "Almighty," for not having performed something of more value to his expelled and unhappy spirit, than this vain funeral pomp. Kehama retorts in anger, reproaching him for the folly of contriving to lose, by means of a stake and a peasant's arm, a life which had been "spell-secured" against disease, fire, and sword. The son answers in deep complaints of misery, and implores his father to exert his irresistible influence to invest his sensitive spirit with a security against the malignant impressions of the elements, to fix him in a favourable condition in defiance of the gods, to endow him with power, and to give him the gratification of witnessing a fearful revenge,—of which delight Kehama promises him he shall have his fill.

"So as he spake, a glow of dreadful pride
Inflamed his cheek, with quick and angry stride
He moved toward the pile,
And raised his hand to hush the crowd, and cried,
Bring forth the murderer!"—p. 15.

Ladurlad comes forward obedient to the call. But Kailyal seizes and clings to a wooden image of Marriataly, the favourite Hindoo goddess of the poor, grappling with such almost preternatural force, that the guards cannot drag her from it. And here comes a piece of gross impiety. The Christian poet (unless the appellation is really meant to be disclaimed) formally and seriously puts himself in the attitude of a devout pagan, and in his own person apostrophizes this member of the Indian pantheon, in language of reverence and kindness.

“ Didst thou, O Marriataly, see their strife?
 In pity didst thou see the suffering maid?
 Or was thine anger kindled, that rude hands
 Assailed thy holy image?...for behold
 The holy image shakes!”—p. 16.

The bank of the river, where this deadly struggle is maintained, gives way; and the idol, and its *protégée*, and her savage assailants, are all flung into the deep stream. Ladurlad remains to receive the concentrated wrath of the “Man-Almighty,” as Kehama is gravely styled—not now by Arvalan, who might be supposed thus to apply the title of divinity consistently with his pagan principles, but by the poet himself, with a scandalous acceptance of those principles. Having stood fixed for some time, in silence, and with total disregard to the few pathetic expressions by which the victim implores lenity, the tyrant pronounces a curse, in the following terms:

“ I charm thy life
 From the weapons of strife,
 From stone and from wood,
 From fire and from flood,
 From the serpent's tooth,
 And the beasts of blood:
 From Sickness I charm thee,
 And Time shall not harm thee;
 But Earth which is mine
 Its fruits shall deny thee;
 And Water shall hear me,
 And know thee and fly thee;
 And the Winds shall not touch thee
 When they pass by thee,
 And the dews shall not wet thee,
 When they fall nigh thee:
 And thou shalt seek Death
 To release thee in vain;
 Thou shalt live in thy pain,
 While Kehama shall reign
 With a fire in thy heart,
 And a fire in thy brain;
 And Sleep shall obey me,
 And visit thee never,
 And the Curse shall be on thee
 For ever and ever.”—pp. 18, 19.

The incongruity between the cantering, jingling versification of this anathema, and its formidable import, and still more the portentous aspect and dreadful attributed power of the personage who utters it, is too obvious to require remark.

An instantaneous shock through the frame and soul of Ladurlad evinces the efficacy of the curse. He remains awhile fixed to the spot, in a state of mind partaking both of stupefaction and dreadful consciousness ; but the spectacle will be best exhibited in the poet's own exquisitely descriptive lines.

“ There, where the Curse had stricken him,
There stood the miserable man,
There stood Ladurlad, with loose-hanging arms,
And eyes of idiot wandering.
Was it a dream ? alas !
He heard the river flow,
He heard the crumbling of the pile,
He heard the wind which showered
The thin white ashes round.
There motionless he stood,
As if he hoped it were a dream,
And feared to move, lest he should prove
The actual misery ;
And still at times he met Kehama's eye,
Kehama's eye that fastened on him still.”—p. 19.

We have made this quotation, partly in order to take an occasion, (which, however, there are a great number of passages in the work that would equally, and some of them still more pointedly, have afforded,) of noticing two things in which no poet surpasses Mr. Southey. One is, the introduction of circumstances which, while slight in themselves, are adapted to give the reader a lively impression of reality in the situations created by the poet—marking even the less obvious of the perceptions by which that reality is evinced to the persons represented as in those situations. This is happily done, in the present instance, by the sound of “the crumbling of the pile,” and the “showering round of the white ashes.” This kind of beauty, recurring frequently, as it does throughout Mr. Southey's poetry, shows an imagination in which all the ideas that are nearly related are

strongly associated. The other excellence is, that he conceives in its most specific form, and perfectly expresses in few words, the state of feeling appropriate to any imagined situation. We are content to cite as an instance, though the poem contains many more perfect ones, the passage near the end of the above extract,

“ And feared to move, lest he should prove
The actual misery.”

From this state Ladurlad is roused, by the recommencing noise of the funeral orgies. He moves away from the spot, unobstructed, for the crowd every where shrinks from around him with horror; and as he recovers from his amazement, his consciousness the more perfectly verifies the full reality and weight of the curse.— But it is time to notice, that the poet gives us the hint, even by a motto in the title-page, that Kehama has rather *taken himself in* by pronouncing this curse; and in the course of the narrative it is made to confer many unthought-of advantages on the victim, amidst his misery, and recoils with vindictive operation on its author. Its first effect in Ladurlad's favour is, that, water being harmless to him, he easily rescues his daughter, whom he decries floating down the river, clinging, in a state of insensibility, to the wooden idol. The scene that follows, displaying the wild exultation that for a few moments beguiles his misery, the appearance of his insensible daughter, his efforts to recover her, her gradual restoration to consciousness, her expressions of surprise and congratulation at finding her father alive and free, his hasty movement of impatience and anguish at hearing them, and the manner in which she is affected by the speedy and unquestionable proof of his dreadful calamity,—is in all respects eminently beautiful. Its exquisite tenderness, and its most accurate and lively painting, make the reader almost insensible, for the time, to the anti-pathetic influence, if we may so call it, of the absurd leading principle of the fable. The same powerful conception of an uncommon state of feeling, and the same rich delineation of the

visible circumstances of the scene, prevail through the next portion of the narrative, which describes the two sufferers lying on the ground almost all the day, absorbed and almost immoveable in misery. As a piece of evening devotion, Kailyal erects and worships the idol goddess ; and the poet appears to help her in this service with all imaginable cordiality, expatiating for her in grateful and pathetic terms on the benignity of this heathen deity. Kailyal's devotion, however, does not amount to a persuasion that it will be of any use to remain in the neighbourhood of her idol ; and, though it is night, she leads her father to wander away, at the direction of chance, hopeless of all relief, and careless of the danger indicated by well-understood signs of the recent ravages of tigers. His torment becomes more intense as he recovers the perfect possession of his thoughts and consciousness, and as the experimental proofs accumulate, which verify, progressively, the reality and extent of the curse. At length they recline against the root of a tree, Ladurlad making a most resolute effort, for his daughter's sake, to repress the outward signs of his misery ; and she fondly but fearfully wishing to attribute his stillness to a mitigation of his sufferings, permitting the short oblivion of sleep. Through complete exhaustion, she sinks into an uneasy slumber, which her father perceives ; and, anxious not to oppress her with the sight of his hopeless misery, and aggravate it to himself by seeing her made a constant sharer, by being a witness, of it, gently withdraws from her, and, on gaining a little distance, runs impetuously away. She awakes—vainly calls after him—and with the impulse of agony rushes forward in the direction in which she believes him gone ; but a temporary cloud of extraordinary density, sometimes experienced in the east, has made the night so utterly dark that she cannot see the ground, and is stopped violently by the bough of a tree : she leans on it in a state of overwhelming misery. All this is told and described in a manner so exquisitely pathetic, with so deep a knowledge of the human passions, and with such a striking prominence of all the images, as still completely to over-

power the effect of the reader's sense of the absurdity of a representation of sufferings from an impossible cause. The scene that immediately follows, in vigour of conception, and the power of giving by words such features and aspects to imaginary objects, as almost to make us expect we shall immediately have them glaring on our eyes, surpasses our previous estimate of the force of even Mr. Southey's genius.—Kailal is leaning against the tree in anguish, and in perfect darkness.

" 'Twas like a dream of horror, and she stood
 Half doubting whether all indeed were true.
 A tiger's howl, loud echoing through the wood,
 Roused her ; the dreadful sound she knew,
 And turned instinctively to what she feared.
 Far off the tiger's hungry howl was heard ;
 A nearer horror met the maiden's view,
 For right before her a dim form appeared,
 A human form in that black night,
 Distinctly shaped by its own lurid light,
 Such light as the sickly moon is seen to shed
 Through spell-rai'd fogs, a bloody baleful red.
 " That Spectre fixed his eyes upon her full,
 The light which shone in their accursed orbs
 Was like a light from hell,
 And it grew deeper, kindling with the view.
 She could not turn her sight
 From that infernal gaze, which like a spell
 Bound her, and held her rooted to the ground.
 It palsied every power !
 Her limbs availed her not in that dread hour.
 There was no moving thence ;
 Thought, memory, sense, were gone ;
 She heard not now the tiger's nearer cry,
 She thought not on her father now,
 Her cold heart's blood ran back,
 Her hand lay senseless on the bough it clasped,
 Her feet were motionless ;
 Her fascinated eyes
 Like the stone eyeballs of a statue fixed,
 Yet conscious of the sight that blasted them.
 " The wind is abroad,
 It opens the clouds ;
 Scattered before the gale,
 They skurry through the sky,
 And the darkness retiring rolls over the vale.
 The stars in their beauty come forth on high,
 And through the dark-blue night

The moon rides on triumphant, broad and bright.
 Distinct and darkening in her light
 Appears that spectre foul.
 The moon-beam gives his form and face to sight,
 The shape of man,
 The living form and face of Arvalan!...
 His hands are spread to clasp her.

“ But at that sight of dread the maid awoke ;
 As if a lightning-stroke
 Had burst the spell of fear,
 Away she broke all frantically and fled.”

There is no pretending to assign a *ne plus ultra* to the powers of poetry, that is, of human genius, with respect to greatness and originality of conception, nor to say that even Milton can absolutely never be exceeded ; nor is it as an example in this kind that we have transcribed this passage : but we are confident that in the power of aggravating a bold conception, by concentrating in it all the ideas, and none but the ideas, that can give it an intenser force, each of these ideas at once being perfect in itself, and perfectly combining to give augmented vigour to the principal one,—and also in the felicity of expression, poetry has no possibility beyond it. A reader who has any power of imagination, returning, after a quick glance over the whole scene, to a more pointed attention to each of the lines by which it is presented, or rather created, will be struck and arrested by several of them, as by some touch of fascination. He will feel that he has never seen more perfect instances of images starting alive through the diction, if we might so express it, than in the lines—“ Distinctly shaped by its own lurid light”—“ And it grew deeper, kindling with the view”—and the two lines suggesting the simile of the eyes of a statue. If the poem contains hardly another passage of such superlative excellence, there yet are many that are but little inferior ; and the critic cannot well find any language that would be extravagant in the expression of admiration of the genius displayed in them.

In this extremity the pagan providence fails not to interpose again for Kailyal ; and this time it is in the form of “ Pollear, gentle god,” into whose fane, fortu-

nately just at hand, the maid had run to take sanctuary, close pursued by Arvalan, who was in the very act of seizing her, in the temple, when "the insulted god," that is, absolutely the image, shaped with an elephant's head,

"Caught him aloft, and from his sinuous grasp,
As if from some tort catapult let loose,
Over the forest hurled him all abroad."

If it is asked, how the "spectre" of a dead man could be the subject of this mechanical feat, the poet signifies that it had, at this time, assumed by some means a substantial "fleshy" form. Now as there are in our own and the neighbouring countries spirits as vile as Arvalan, also inhabiting and actuating bodies, the moral of this part of the fiction is, plainly, that the part of the world where there are temples to Pollear is, for that reason, a much preferable country for unprotected maidens than this where Christianity forbids any such sanctuaries.—It would have been in perfect consistency if the poet had here, as in a former instance, called forth his own sensibility to perform, in Kailyal's name, an act of adoring gratitude to the heathen god: but the maiden's terror is made to overpower her piety. "She tarried not to see what heavenly power, had saved her in that hour." She hastened away, and stumbled and fell senseless under the shade of a manchineel.

Thus far we have witnessed a remarkable triumph of powerful genius. The curse of the "Almighty Rajah" is a fancy, to which no force of poetry, ever displayed by mortal man, could give any, even the faintest shade of semblance of serious reality or possibility—or excite for one instant, in any cultivated English reader of mature age, any other sentiment than what is naturally awakened at a pure perfect absurdity, especially when fabricated and gravely offered to us by an European writer of our own times; and yet, in following the effects, consistently imagined, of this malediction, we are compelled, by main force of admirable poetry, to take, thus far, an odd sort of concern in the fate of its supposed victims. This compulsory spell falls on us

again in its original force, for a while, at several stages in the progress of the story.—Its power is completely broken on our coming up to the manchineel tree above-mentioned. For Kailyal, when nearly dead under its pernicious shade, is taken away by a benevolent deveta or genius, whimsically denominated a Glendoveer, and borne up to the abode of Casyapa, the “Sire of Gods,” on Mount “Himakoot,” which,

“From mid-earth rising in mid-heaven,
Shines in its glory like the throne of Even.”

It is a place of semi-celestial beauty and salubrity; and the maiden, laid near a sacred fountain, which testifies more than a lover's joy at touching her hand, gradually revives, and thinks herself passed by death into heaven, while Ereenia, the deveta, holds an explanatory conversation about her with his father Casyapa. After much is said on both sides, Ereenia resolves, and as soon as he notifies the design has the sanction of the “Father of the Immortals,” to convey her to the Swerga, the heaven of Indra. He instantly calls a “Ship of Heaven,” a vessel “instinct with thought,” self-moving, and having at its prow the living head of an angel. The maiden is placed in it: Ereenia, on wing, accompanies the voyage; and they soon reach the Swerga, the strange and beautiful scenery of which explains the whole object of the poet in sending Kailyal on this adventure. In her hearing Ereenia has a dialogue with Indra, whose appearance announces a mingled kindness and austerity. They discuss the measures that ought to be adopted to avert the danger threatened to the Swerga itself by the dreadful power and designs of Kehama; the deveta venturing to reproach the god for want of decision and exertion, and expressing his determination to represent the state of the universe to Seeva himself, the highest of the gods. Indra has no objection to this, but signifies in manner gentle yet peremptory, that the maid, as being a mere mortal, though a most virtuous and amiable one, cannot be a permitted inhabitant of the Swerga; and she herself most earnestly entreats to be sent back to the earth,

to be the companion, and if possible the consoler, of her miserable father. But Indra directs that she be conveyed to Mount Meru, a place, he says,

“ Below our sphere, and yet above the earth ;”

to which her father also shall be brought to meet her, enjoying, for a short interval, a full exemption from his sufferings.

Our author has made a strenuous and unrelaxing effort to spread all the colours of poetry over all this portion of the fiction ; and it is very mortifying to think how much instructive pleasure might have been given by a rational application of about half as much beauty of images and versification, as he has here succeeded in throwing away on this mythological inanity. Not only is this beauty wasted lamentably in being expended on such a futile and most ridiculous piece of heathenism ; it is also injured, *as* beauty, by the nature of the subject, considered merely as matter of poetical exhibition. The subject being made up of gods, devetas, super-terrestrial mountains, sky voyages, Swerga gales, groves, and lakes, has a showy uniformity which precludes all relief of poetical light and shade. All is fine, and gaudy, and splendid, in every direction. The whole vision is presented in one richly-coloured glare. The mind is dissatisfied, and soon tired, with this sort of beauty ; in the same manner as the eye of a person who at noon-day in summer stands on a bare eminence, without any kind of recesses or shades, and looks round on a landscape all burnished with a perfectly unclouded sunshine. There is one very spirited and ingenious attempt to break the tameness of this magnificence, by forcing or bewitching the elements into such a kind of combination and harmony, in the Swerga, as they have never been induced to consent to in the world allotted to Adam's people—where water and fire were less intended, as it should seem, for a playful self-construction into palaces, than for the uses of mills, steam-engines and kettles, cookery and washing.

“ On that ethereal Lake whose waters lie
Blue and transpicuous, like another sky,

The Elements had reared their King's abode.
 A strong controlling power their strife suspended,
 And there their hostile essences they blended,
 To form a palace worthy of the God.
 Built on the Lake the waters were its floor ;
 And here its walls were water arched with fire,
 And here were fire with water vaulted o'er :
 And spires and pinnacles of fire
 Round watery cupolas aspire.
 And domes of rainbow rest on fiery towers,
 And roofs of flame are turretted around
 With cloud, and shafts of cloud with flame are bound.
 Here, too, the Elements for ever veer,
 Ranging around with endless interchanging ;
 Pursued in love, and so in love pursuing,
 In endless revolutions here they roll ;
 For ever their mysterious work renewing :
 The parts all shifting, still unchanged the whole.
 Even we on earth, at intervals descry
 Gleams of the glory, streaks of flowing light,
 Openings of heaven, and streams that flash at night
 In fitful splendour, through the northern sky."—pp. 65, 66.

It will be acknowledged that, as to all that belongs to diction and numbers, nothing can exceed the felicity of this passage ; and that in point of elegance of architecture, there is probably no other living professor of the art of poetical building that could have framed, of the same material, so beautiful a fantasy of a structure, for Absurdity to hold its residence in, and laugh through the ethereal windows at dull Philosophy. But since it is presumable that the poem was meant for reading here in this world, even on this earth, we cannot but hold it an injudicious license of genius, thus to represent water and fire as absolved from all the laws which we see them invariably observing, positively, and with relation to each other, in this world, where neither poets nor heathen gods have prescribed their mode of action. Admitting readily, and even adding our testimony, that in the *Swerga*, the temper and conduct of water and fire are exactly such as here described, we cannot see any good use of an attempt to make the people of this world discontent with the less playful, more obstinate, but perhaps, after all, more serviceable spirit and deportment, of our own fire and water.

As the scenes and persons of the Swerga cannot enchant any reader for one instant into a dreaming visionary mood, there would be no finding patience to stay there till the end of the adventure but for the sake of seeing what is to become of Kailyal, who is always and every where so lovely and magnanimous, that some very small degree of interest survives to linger about her, even in the Swerga,—notwithstanding our perfect faith in an averment that falls from Indra, in one of his speeches, that no mortal has any business there. The character of Ereenia, the good genius, is formed of a certain measure of absolute goodness, without any complexity of moral constitution, or any very marked peculiarities. It is, if we may so express it, just so much pure light defined into a shape by a single outline. His personal form, his wings, and his movements, have every grace they could receive from a poet who can write such lines as the following :

“ Of human form divine was he;
 The immortal youth of Heaven who floated by,
 Even such as that divinest form shall be
 In those blest stages of our onward race,
 When no infirmity,
 Low thought, nor base desire, nor wasting care,
 Debase the semblance of our heavenly sire.”

While Kailyal is conveying to the paradise of Mount Meru, we are suddenly set down in the presence of Kehama, who having already sacrificed ninety-nine consecrated horses, at so many successive periods, is approaching the moment for offering the hundredth, as a sacrifice, of which the effect is to be nothing less than to wrest the Swerga from the possession of Indra. In this curious coupling of causes and effects, the Hindoo poets fully authorize their European rival, who begins his preface by adverting to this point.

* * * * *

The preparations for the sacrifice are managed with great address to stimulate expectation, and yet prevent the smallest surmise of what is really to happen. There is a very fine description of Kehama's waiting for the

moment, rising, going to the altar, and taking the axe, while the wild horse is made to approach by two vast lines of archers, who gradually close in and contract the area in order to impel him on. He must not have been profaned by the touch of any human hand; for that would destroy the merit of the sacrifice. Just before the fatal moment, a man darts into the area, through the lines of archers, unhurt by a shower of their arrows, seizes the horse's mane, leaps on his back, and with frantic cry and gestures gallops round the area, while the tyrant clasps his hands in agony. Here the poet again triumphs imperially over, at once, the unfortunate quality of his subject, and the repugnance of his coldest reader, who is surprised into exultation by this sudden intervention of Ladurlad, empowered for this vengeance on the tyrant, solely through the effect of the tyrant's curse. Ladurlad, however, is disappointed in his hope that the Rajah's anger would inflict death. In his utmost fury Kehama is not betrayed to forget that this would be a favour. As the greatest possible revenge, he dismisses the offender under the continuance of his curse; but makes a horrible massacre of the archers for not having prevented him from forcing through their ranks.

The sufferer, wandering away, goes unconsciously in the direction to his own former habitation. Entering its melancholy solitude, looking at the flowers in the garden, and at the marriage bower, finding the domestic fowls that Kailyal used to feed flocking around him, and hearing the sounds of thoughtless mirth from a distant crowd of people, he is made to feel a succession of afflictive emotions, excellently conceived and discriminated, and intermingled with images, most happily painted, of the various objects which excite them. Being powerfully reminded of Kailyal, he pours out a fervent prayer for her to Marriataly; and our worthy venerators of the Hindoo gods will be excessively affected and grieved, that it should be precisely in this act of "religion" that he is broken in upon by the "fiendish" visage and laugh of Arvalan, scoffing at his prayer. He glances round for some instrument of offence, and happens to

find the very stake with which he had disembodied that fiend ; but it is ineffective against the " impassive shade," which renews its laugh, and concentrates, without the aid of a lens or mirror, a quantity of sun-beams, making the focus fall on Ladurlad with such a power as to reduce the stake instantly to ashes, the man himself however being, by the " fire in his heart and brain," rendered invulnerable to all other fire. But Arvalan next raises a storm of sand which overwhelms and almost suffocates him wherever he turns. Down in a moment comes Ereenia with his hanger drawn, sends the fiend, who is represented as *not* impassive to this attack, howling away ; then calls the " Ship of Heaven," and Ladurlad is instantly in the delicious gardens of Mount Meru, where he finds his daughter and his wife.

It may be worth while to notice, in passing, that Mr. Southey, in adopting some of the Hindoo fictions, neither regards himself as under any obligation to keep in view the general scheme of the mythology, nor acknowledges the duty of strictly conforming to the orthodox standard in his manner of exhibiting these detached parts. He takes out any piece of fiction that he can most advantageously turn into English poetry, leaves out of it whatever he dislikes, adds whatever he pleases, and, for the convenience of versification, transforms the most venerable and established names. Thus all the bearings of these fantastic scenes and objects, as relative to the Brahminical system, are confounded, and indeed, totally lost. When, in imitation of a much greater genius, he takes Christians to the top of an exceeding high mountain, Himakoot, for instance, or Meru, he not only fails to show, in regular perspective, all the kingdoms of the Hindoo mythological world, and the glory of them ; he also fails to enable the tempted spectator to form any judgment, or probable guess, as to the boundary and the cardinal points of the wide scene, and as to the real locality, relatively to these points and to one another, of those objects which are made visible above the mist that covers all but so much of the immense region, and gives a dubious colour to what it does

not conceal. Here we are, as we are told, on the top of Himakoot, or Hemacuta, and yonder appears what we are told is the more elevated top of Meru, and somewhere beyond the clouds is the Swerga; but we are made never the wiser, as to what parts of the Purana universe these lofty and magnificent positions occupy or constitute—as to what there is contiguous to them or between them—or as to the degree of excellence of one above another. Now, though, in so far as the tempter's object, the captivating of the spectator's mind by the beauties and wonders of the heathen scenery, is defeated by this exhibition of broken and misrepresented pieces, which no human imagination can combine into a picture, we are sincerely glad; yet we think the said tempter has herein flagrantly violated the just laws of poetry. It is surely required, of an European poet at least, that when he undertakes to figure forth scenes and personages, he should have in his mind some defined economy of existence, to which they may belong; that the circumscription and principal lines of this economy should be clearly brought and kept within the view of his readers; and that the fictions should be in strict conformity with the laws of this economy, and capable of being so referred to their proper place in it, as that the reader's mind can glance from one to another, and from each of them over the whole breadth of the system, with a ready apprehension of *whereabouts he is*, if we may so express it, in this poetical world, at each successive stage of the fictitious relation. It may be a matter of perfect indifference whether the ideal economy, within which the poet chooses to place the scene of his action, be one of the heathen mythologies; or be drawn from parts formed from several of them, and so modified as to combine into one consistent scheme; or be formed of a combination of some parts of them with creations of the poet's own fancy; or be purely and entirely a creation of that fancy. All this may be left to his choice or caprice, the only grand indispensable rule being, (we are here setting aside all moral and religious considerations) that whichever of these he chooses, he must make it

an intelligible and orderly economy—a world of which the reader's mind can comprehend the general constitution, the disposition and relation of the parts, and all the chief arrangements. This rule has been so little regarded in the present work, that, in trying to follow out the fiction, the reader often finds himself *in no world at all*. His imagination labours and despairs amidst a chaos of large crude fragments of Hindoo mythology, (exhibiting indeed in this broken state not a more complete disorder than they would if put together (intermixed with pieces of this real world of earth, and not brought in the least degree nearer to a congruous or intelligible scheme by being, many of them, transformed from the genuine Hindoo absurdity, into a spurious absurdity of the poet's own. In short, there will not be one person among all the readers of this work, that on coming to the close of it, after having most attentively followed the poet to Himakoot, to Meru, to the Swerga, to the "World's End," and to Padalon, will find his imagination possessed of any thing like a comprehensive view of these scenes, with what they respectively contain, disposed in their relative order, and forming one grand scheme.—This would be fatal, infallibly, to the interest of any work of the greatest possible genius. There may be the greatest admiration of beautiful parts, there may be also the strongest perception of the richness of imagery spread over the whole chaotic assemblage; but in spite of all this, the mind will revolt irrecoverably from a work which confounds its best exertions to form within itself the order of the scenes which the work calls it to contemplate. It is barely worth while to observe, that all the great epic poets, (of Europe, we mean) of ancient and modern times, have maintained, in their representations of ideal worlds, that principle of order which requires even the boldest and wildest creation of fancy, to be shaped according to a systematic and comprehensible scheme. Were it possible that any reader, while displeased at a formless exhibition of unjoined pieces of mythology, should yet be so captivated with the quality of the material, as to resolve that he absolutely

will know something about the *system* from which these precious but here adulterated fictions have been obtained—it will be fair to suggest the question to him, whether he is sure of fifty future years of life, and health, and leisure; whether, being sure of that, he can be confident of his unconquerable perseverance so long in daily laborious research; and whether, this also being out of doubt, he is certain that no worthier use could be made of his life. Even if he were content to live without a knowledge of the system, and his curiosity aspired no further than to a clear and full understanding about the Swerga and Mount Meru, it is right he should be apprised of the previous necessity of securing himself a long vacation from business and all other studies; as he will find that all our erudite orientalists are exceedingly reserved in their communication about the Swerga, and will be convinced, on looking into a most learned essay in the eighth volume of the Asiatic Researches, that the questions respecting the locality, the shape, the occupants, and the precincts, of Mount Meru, will demand an investigation several years long at the least. The ordinary doctrine, given out in a very vague way, calls the Swerga the heaven of Indra, and makes Meru the north pole and polar regions, where this same Indra has a delightful paradise, a splendid palace, a junta of gods, a stupendous elephant, and a car which the poet professes to have taken as the model for his “Ship of Heaven.” Whether there be any ices there, but what are prepared in cellars to regale the gods in hot weather, and whether the Swerga is to be found any where else than in the park and gardens round the palace, is not deposed with any thing like the precision which is desirable in such important questions.

It is probable enough, however, that Ladurlad cared as little as we do *where* this mount Meru should be, so long as he there felt himself comfortably out of the reach of Kehama. We find him rid of his sufferings, and with delightful sensations rushing in upon him on all sides. One of the first of them is from his hand being in the water of a “blessed lake,” on the bank of which the Glendoveer lays him down. This lake is

formed by the Ganges, at a middle stage of its descent from heaven. The whole course of the descent is traced in meanders and cascades of most elegant verse ; and the poet relates, in his own person, and with a religious gravity, the origination of this river from the sweat which started on the face of Seeva, in the moment of his fright at the dreadful effect produced on the universe in consequence of the shutting of one of his eyes by the finger of his spouse Parvati, in her wanton playfulness. We will transcribe the lines to show what progress Mr. Southey judges the people of this island to have made in good sense and good taste, by the aid of all their schools, colleges, churches, and libraries.

“ A Stream descends on Meru mountain ;
 None hath seen its secret fountain ;
 It had its birth, so sages say,
 Upon the memorable day
 When Parvati presumed to lay,
 In wanton play,
 Her hands, too venturous goddess, in her mirth,
 On Seeva's eyes, the light and life of Earth.
 Thereat the heart of the Universe stood still ;
 The Elements ceased their influence ; the Hours
 Stopped on the eternal round ; Motion and Breath,
 Time, Change, and Life, and Death,
 In sudden trance oppressed, forgot their powers.
 A moment, and the dread eclipse was ended ;
 But, at the thought of Nature thus suspended,
 The sweat on Seeva's forehead stood,
 And Ganges thence upon the world descended,
 The Holy River, the Redeeming Flood.”—p. 94.

A blooming bower appears to spring up of a sudden (the poet says the “ earth builds it up”) round Ladurlad, his daughter, and the Glendoveer. Yedillian, the beloved wife whom Ladurlad had long since lost by death, is added to the happy company, with circumstances of extreme tenderness ; the description of which is followed by a declamation, in a somewhat inferior style, on the continuance, perfection, and perpetuity of love after death. Kehama's victim, in this happy sojourn in a region beyond the power of the curse, does not forget that he is soon to feel again its malignant force. But Ereenia enlarges splendidly on the power

and goodness of the gods, the Avatars of Vishnoo, and the certainty of a final triumph and recompense to invincible virtue. And, notwithstanding that it is declared expressly, at the distance of only two pages, that "all in Heaven and Earth" but this very Ladurlad, had "stood mute in dolorous expectation" on the occasion of the sacrifice which Kehama had so nearly completed,—notwithstanding this, Ladurlad, in contemplating the power and justice of the gods, becomes wonderfully strong in "Faith;" a quality or virtue which, as we can recollect, appears with grand distinction in a Book which was sent to drive pagan gods and their worship from the earth, and which therefore, we submit, will give little tolerance to a language like the following, as applied by a poet, instructed in Christianity, to a supposed confidence in Vishnoo and Seeva.

"So to Ladurlad now was given
New strength and confidence in Heaven,
And hope and faith invincible."—p. 102.

"Thus was Ladurlad's soul imbued
With hope and holy fortitude."

"Faith was their comfort, faith their stay."—p. 103.

While Ladurlad is thus edified by contemplating the gods as to be *his* deliverers from Kehama, the gods are edified and comforted marvellously in contemplating him as having been *their* deliverer from the identical Kehama. Sundry of them approach, in the air, the happy bower, to look at this saviour of the divine immortals from a Rajah of flesh and blood. As might be supposed, however, their attention is almost as much attracted by the charms of their deliverer's pretty daughter; and having learnt a little of the characters of those gentry, by means of translations of parts of the Hindoo "Sacred Scriptures," we are warranted in attributing her safety to any thing rather than their gratitude or their honour. Perhaps they were looking forward apprehensively to the next hundredth horse of Kehama; the accomplishment of which sacrifice indeed it would hardly be worth Ladurlad's while to defeat by another

opportune intervention in favour of such a set of villains. From whatever cause, they forbear all injury or insult in the present instance ; except that it is fairly impossible for Camdeo, the god of love, to deny himself the sport of aiming just one couple of shafts at Ereenia and Kailyal. The former is struck with the arrow, but calmly and sincerely derides the archer. At the instant that the other shaft is pointed at Kailyal, the string breaks, fortunately for her, as it is meant to be intimated, but rather unaccountably, as it is made of *bees*, linked together by the legs. The pieces of this broken bow-string dart away instead of the shaft, to Kailyal, and delighted play and “buzz about her.”

Mischief is aimed at the inhabitants of this delightful abode from another quarter. Arvalan, after being sent off hacked and howling by Ereenia, had recourse, not for the first time, to Lorrinite, a dreadful enchantress, demanding to be informed where he might find his escaped prey, and to be furnished with arms and armour of proof against her celestial guardian. It may well be believed he can hardly make a demand which she cannot satisfy, when it is seen by what means she discovers to him Kailyal's asylum.

“ At this the Witch, through shrivelled lips and thin,
Sent forth a sound half-whistle and half-hiss.
Two winged Hands came in,
Armless and bodyless,
Bearing a globe of liquid crystal, set
In frame as diamond bright, yet black as jet.
A thousand eyes were quenched in endless night,
To form that magic globe ; for Lorrinite
Had, from their sockets, drawn the liquid sight,
And kneaded it, with re-creating skill
Into this organ of her mighty will.
Look in yonder orb, she cried,
Tell me what is there descried.”—p. 116.

What he describes, is, of course, a picture of the top of Meru, with its bower, and the happy inhabitants, each of whom he instantly recognizes. He takes the arms and armour of infernal fabric brought by Lorrinite, and eagerly ascends her car of adamant, fixed over the backs

of two mighty dragons, which, directed by him, dart upward with inconceivable force. He is in sight of the palace and bowers of Indra, and exulting in demoniac anticipation, when coming to a level with the zone of adamantine rocks round Mount Meru, the car is seized and drawn by an irresistible attraction: the dragons cannot take it upward another inch: they, and it, and the demoniac, drive, and whirl, and rage away, till they dash against the rocks; and the miscreant falls ten thousand thousand fathoms, pitching into "an ice-rift, 'mid the eternal snow." "There," as the poet says "let him howl,"

"Groan there, . . and there, with unavailing moan,
For aid on his Almighty Father call."

We think this catastrophe is a little emblematical of the fate of genius, when exerting its vigour on such subjects as this. Can the poet imagine a possibility of pleasing any one mortal by all this idle devilment? He cannot know so little of the intellectual taste of the times, as to suppose that, because there are some cultivated readers who are disposed to look into the romance and poetry of the darker ages of Europe, and are considerably interested in observing what silly monstrosities, in the way of magic, apprenticeship of devils to witches, and a hundred various modes of infernality, were capable of being made popular amidst the wretched barbarism and superstition of those times, therefore a new story of the same sort, made up and told, with the same earnest gravity, in the year 1810, can excite any other sensations than the most intense disgust and contempt. It is in a poet's power, as we are certified by the present instance, to effect his own transmigration back into a monk or minstrel of the rudest age, or even into an ancient Brahmin poet-laureate to the thirty-three millions of gods. But really in that case he must be contented to sing to his adopted contemporaries. He will not be able to take back with him his actual contemporaries of the nineteenth century—excepting, perhaps, Messrs. Twining and Scott Waring. Assuredly, the generality of

of the people of these times will peremptorily decline putting themselves into a condition to be delighted with the story of a woman, plainly a real human female, who, at the price of delivering herself up to a legion^s of "fiends," was empowered to command their services for all malicious operations; who, by her connexion with them, became a kind of living embodied "hell," shooting from her eyes a quintessence of "venomous" spirit which blasted all animal and all vegetable life; whose approach made the "dry and mouldering bones in the grave sweat with fear;" who formed, for the purpose of human destruction, a league with the *Calis*, the "Demon Queens," presiding over the Hindoo cities, and a partnership with "Sani, the dreadful god, who rides abroad upon the king of the ravens," to relieve him in the toils of killing; who directed with her finger or her word the operation of earthquakes, plagues, locusts, floods, and drought; who could make a magic oracle-glass of the extracted "liquid sight of a thousand human eyes;" whose stable was a den of yoked 'dragons; and who had and did many other most prodigious things, according to the evidence given in this volume. To think that amidst the beams of the sun and moon, the light of the Christian religion, and the sense and philosophy of modern Europe, a genius like Mr. Southey's should be solemnly employed in business like this!

We will try to make better haste towards the conclusion of our analysis.—"Old Casyapa" arrives, in the "Ship of Heaven," on Meru, to announce that the day is come for completing Kehama's sacrifice, which it is declared that nobody in earth or heaven can prevent this time; that Indra and his suite are preparing to quit the Swerga, taking with them, as it should appear by what is said afterwards, the famous palace itself; that the consummating stroke of the sacrifice will presently be felt like an earthquake through Mount Meru; (between which and the Swerga, the distinction is still made out in but a very faint and confused way;) that Casyapa himself is going to be ejected from Himakoot,) in his lease of which, indeed, we wonder that Kehama, (whose

estate must long have included that district of merely terrestrial highland,) had not long since taken occasion to find a flaw; and that Ladurlad and his daughter must instantly return to the earth. The heroic victim hears this with a simple dignity of manner which the poet is always eminently successful in giving him; places his daughter in the "etherial bark;" and himself beside her, feels the sudden return of the curse in his descent, and reaches the earth about the moment that Kehama begins his triumphant ascent to take possession of the Swerga,—an event accompanied with the most dreadful commotion through heaven and earth, and of which the following lines conclude the celebration :

"Up rose the Rajah through the conquered sky,
To seize the Swerga for his proud abode;
Myriads of evil genii round him fly,
As royally, *on wings of winds*, he rode,
And scaled high Heaven, triumphant like a God."—p. 130.

Here an exceedingly remarkable image, applied in the Bible to the agency of the Almighty, and not made common by any other application, is transferred to a personage at once fictitious, connected with paganism, and horribly wicked. The natural tendency of this is to associate in the reader's mind, by a community in so very remarkable, so very peculiar a descriptive representation, the idea of that Being and of this personage; and no language of reprobation can be too strong for the occasion.

Kailyal tenderly insinuates to her father, the request that he will not again separate from her, and he with equal tenderness promises, that by choice he never will. They are placed in a glade amidst a wood; and on their looking round to consider which way they shall wander, she suggests, that certain, alike in every situation, to be pursued by their destiny, they shall in vain seek any more eligible place than the one where they are, which has various recommendations: but in making her so directly specify among them

"A brook that winds through this sequestered glade,
And yonder woods, to yield us fruit and shade,"

the poet has not duly preserved that perceptive watchfulness of affection, in which she is generally made so perfect; as water, fruit, and shade, would be of no use to her father. The features of the scene, the great banyan tree, and the small lake, with lotus flowers: the brute inhabitants, the leopards, elephants, monkies, and birds, are presented in a picture in which the more steady phenomena of their natural history, are combined with many of those fine and variable circumstances, which scarcely appear to any but a poet's eye, and leave, but on a poet's imagination, no trace that can be reduced into language. And, what could not have been expected, these sketches do not lose the distinctness of their beauty, as true delineations, by being combined with a great deal of extra-natural intelligence, obsequiousness, admiration, and affection, displayed by all sorts of animals towards Kailyal. The fortitude of the two sufferers becomes more and more consolidated; and is so finely represented, that it would have furnished a noble spectacle, if the fable had allowed of its being rested on any basis that truth did not require the reader to condemn. The reader however, that is aggrieved by this wretched obligation on the poet, of fidelity to his fable, will not obtain much sympathy from that poet,—if we may judge from the appearance of free and complacent effusion of soul in reciting Kailyal's renewed emotions to Marriatally, and Ladurlad's to a "higher power," as it is here pronounced to be;

"To her, who on her secret throne reclined,
Amid the milky sea, by Veeshnoo's side,
Looks with an eye of mercy on mankind.
By the Preserver, with his power endued,
There Voomdavee beholds this lower clime,
And marks the silent suffering of the good,
To recompense them in her own good time ;"—p. 137.

—if we may judge by his so formally adopting, as appropriate to the case, the peculiar phrases of Christian theology :

"Such strength the will revealed had given
This holy pair, such influxes of grace,
That to their solitary resting place
They brought the peace of Heaven."—p. 138.

Thus a writer who displays, on so many subjects, an exquisitely refined perception of discriminations and congruities, and highly excels in preserving, amidst a diversified multiplicity of things, the purity and integrity of any quality or sentiment, which he regards as of sufficient dignity to be kept thus inviolate, is willing to confound the true religion with a detestable superstition, by very carefully making their devotional sentiments identical, and the language descriptive of them interchangeable.

Kailyal's mingled despondency and hope, respecting any further care or intervention of Ereenia, are very delicately characterized by some of the symptoms of personal tenderness. While pensively afraid that he has withdrawn his guardianship, and unaware that she is unceasingly followed by the keenest attention of Lorinite, Arvalan, and Kehama, which last, it is intimated, perceives her destiny to be mysteriously connected with his own, one more preparatory portion of that destiny is accomplished, by her being suddenly seized and carried off, by a band of Yoguees, as a fit bride for Jaggernaut. A thousand frantic pilgrims draw forth, in the night, that hideous idol, with Kailyal placed beside him, amidst the glare of torches, and a terrible hubbub of shouts, gongs, and trumpets, which overpowers the groans of the self-devoted wretches perishing under the wheels of the enormous carriage that

——— "Rolls on and crushes all.
Through blood and bones it ploughs its dreadful path.
Groans rise unheard; the dying cry,
And death and agony,
Are trodden under foot by yon mad throng
Who follow close and thrust the deadly wheels along."—p. 147.

Filled with dread and amazement at this scene, which the poet describes with congenial fury of verse, she is yet soon to be placed in one of more intense horror. She is conveyed back to the temple; hailed with soft music by a band of female ministers to its abomination, as the happy bride of the god; conducted into a retired apartment; and there left alone: but not long. The

chief priest of this infernal fane makes his appearance in the apartment, and approaches her, as the god. Suddenly he is obstructed by some unseen power, and with a horrid cry falls dead on the floor. But just as Kailyal looks up, expecting to see Ereenia as the inflictor of this just vengeance, the body becomes re-animated with another soul,

“And in the fiendish joy within his eyes,
She knew the hateful spirit who looked through
Their specular orbs, . . . clothed in the flesh of man
She knew the accursed soul of Arvalan.”

She calls on Ereenia, who instantly appears, catches Arvalan up to the roof of the temple, and dashes him in pieces on the floor. At this instant appears Lorrinite with her “host of demons,” whom she commands to seize Ereenia, carry him off, and confine him in the ancient submarine, “sepulchres of Baly;” which is all done in a minute, while she makes up the smashed corpse again for the use of Arvalan, whom she incites and leaves to seize the prey, thrown at last so completely into his power. But Kailyal, in cool and desperate self-possession, snatches a torch, (it is not explained how such a thing could be within her reach,) and sets the furniture of the bed in a blaze, which catches, in a moment, all that is combustible in the temple, except in the precise spot where she is placed, and drives away the scorched and bellowing miscreant. She is resigning herself to perish by this infinitely preferable mode of sacrifice, when, as another felicitous consequence of the curse, Ladurlad rushes in and bears away his daughter through the flames,—which Kehama had made harmless to him, but which the poet alone could make harmless to her.

They then make a long journey to the ruins of the city of Baly, to rescue Ereenia; the maiden, for her now almost adored Glendoveer's sake, exulting, and even Ladurlad at intervals heroically exulting in the power, conferred by the dreadful charm, of entering the vaults under the ocean. During their journey, he gives her the history of Baly, whose ambition, in making a

similar attempt to that in which Kehama had recently succeeded, had consigned him to Padalon or Hell, but whose many eminent virtues had obtained him there the high situation of judge of the dead. They reach at length the shore, where they see the pinnacles of the ancient structures, extending to a distance in the sea, Ladurlad commences the enterprise with great alacrity and elation : advancing into the sea, which starts and separates before him, rises above him, as his way descends, and soon closes in an arch over him, preserving, wherever he advances or turns, a vacancy of little greater extent than the dimensions of his person. This adventure furnishes, by what he sees, and the spirit in which he sees and acts some of the finest poetry in the work. Nothing, for example, can be more exquisitely described, than the varying lights and shades on the sand.

“ With steady tread he held his way
 Adown the sloping shore.
 The dark green waves, with emerald hue,
 Imbue the beams of day,
 And on the wrinkled sand below,
 Rolling their mazy network to and fro,
 Light shadows shift and play.”—p. 168.

Sea monsters impetuously dart towards him, but as hastily dart away. He reaches the gate of the ancient city, but pauses awhile in admiration before he enters it. It is open, just as it had been left by the multitude, rushing out to escape, when the sea was rising to overwhelm the city. All the structures are represented as remaining unimpaired, after an unknown series of ages ; which have only given, through the medium of an affection of the spectator's mind, a more awful aspect to the temples and palaces, a more mysterious and yet impressive significance to the statues, emblems, and inscriptions. And the effect is prodigiously heightened by the profound solitude, “ the everlasting stillness of the deep.” The whole most admirable description has a tone of solemnity perfectly harmonious with the magnificence, the antiquity, the submarine retirement and ob-

scurity, and the total and endless solitude of the scene. And it greatly heightens our interest in Ladurlad's character that the manner in which he contemplates and explores these wonders, withdrawn for ever from all other human sight, shows him worthy to tread

" Those streets which never, since the days of yore,
By human footstep had been visited ;
Those streets which never more
A human foot shall tread."

He takes the broad mighty impression of so strange a scene; gazing with such an absorption of solemn delight that he forgets, for a little while, the curse, the immediate object of his adventure, and even his daughter. He acquires dignity, by being thus made to possess so much mental faculty as to be, in defiance of all circumstances and distractions, powerfully arrested, by what is grand, awful, and beautiful. It might be doubted, perhaps, whether an Indian "*peasant*" would be likely to have had his imagination and taste sufficiently cultivated to be susceptible of so strong a captivation; but there is no saying how much he may have profited in the studies conducive to fine taste, during his residence on Mount Meru, in the society of Ereenia, and in reach of Indra's fine library.

Recollecting, after this short and happy entrancement, the purpose he came upon, he finds and enters the way to the sepulchral chambers of the kings; losing, as he goes down, "the sea-green light of day," which is supposed to have been thus far transmitted to him, and meeting in the passage another light, "of red and fiery hue." This proves to proceed from carbuncles set in the sceptres, held in the hands of the dead kings, sitting in this great vault each on a throne, in a separate "alcove," and all in the condition of perfect, fresh-looking, and supple flesh and limb, with eyes open, "large, glazed, fixed, and meaningless," and "rayless," except that they "dimly reflected to that gem-born light." There was another alcove, which had been intended for the sepulchral residence of Baly, if he had not given

himself a different destiny ; and there Ladurlad descends Ereenia, bound to the rock with a ponderous chain of adamant, and guarded by a most hideous sea-monster, fixed to that station by Lorrinite. There ensues a furious unintermitted combat of six days and nights between this monster and our hero ; who, being charmed against both fatigue and wounds, literally tires to death his strong and fell antagonist, by the evening of the seventh day. He then cuts with a scimitar the fetters of the Glendoveer, and they most joyfully ascend in quest of Kailyal, who has been waiting so many days with a fearful impatience, that had grown at last almost to anguish, but has become the impatience of confident hope, from the sight of the dead monster, which has previously risen and drifted to the shore. They meet ; when, in the very moment of their rapture, who should appear but Arvalan again, and Lortinite with her demons, ready to make once more their respective captives ?

But it so happens that, unseen, Baly also was come to the identical spot. He suddenly shines out “among them in the midnight air ;” seizes with a hundred hands the whole crew ; stamps and splits the earth ; and in an instant plunges down with them into Padalon—where the reader is for their sakes heartily content there should be a permanent suspension of the Habeas Corpus. A violent shriek of invocation to Kehama brings him from the Swerga, with the velocity and fury of a thunderbolt, but too late to rescue his son. But he also can stamp, make the earth cleave again, and hurl down a challenge to Baly and Yamen, assuring them it shall not be long before he makes ingress on their territory, and gives them some warm employment. The earth has his permission to close up the rent ; and he then fixes his eyes on Kailyal, with a somewhat less than usual severity of aspect, and signifies to her, that as she now perceives it to be among the appointments of fate that he and she alone, of all mortals, are to drink the Amreeta, or drink of immortality, it necessarily follows that she is his destined bride. He invites her to the accomplishment of that glorious destiny ; and to prove himself quite serious in

the affair, he at a word neutralizes the deadly curse, and observes to Ladurlad in a condescending and almost pensive tone, that they both have been, thus far, but fulfilling, unconsciously, the decrees of fate. The lady declines, in terms of, perhaps, deficient politeness, to become queen of the Swerga, "and of whatever worlds beside infinity may hide." His brow darkens, and the sentence that begins with a kind of plea that she ought to be gratefully proud to comply, ends in a threatening that she shall be compelled. A violent fulmination of his anger explodes him back into the sky. Ladurlad has the curse again, and his daughter a leprosy. She is magnanimous enough to rejoice in the protection which this will afford her, against the dangers to which her beauty would have exposed her. The only distress is, to think what its effect may be on the complacency of Ereenia.

That Glendoveer, the while, is gone on an "emprize" which the whole magazine of pompous epithets is emptied to blazon out as most daring and awful. It is to represent his wrongs to Seeva himself, the uppermost of all the gods. Though the said Seeva is declared omnipresent, yet the appellant must make his petition on a certain silver Mount Calasay, the outermost point, or somewhere beyond the outermost point, of all worlds. The difficulty of the achievement, in point of time and flying merely, is formidably intimated by a serious and authentic relation—how that once on a time, when Brahma and Veeshno were quarrelling most furiously for the pre-eminence, Seeva (there being most likely no officer of police at hand), determined to put an end to the rivalry, by showing them who was the master of them both. For this purpose, he presented himself to them in the form of a fiery column, the longitude of which they were to explore; but a thousand years of ascent, and "ten myriads years" of descent, did not bring Brahma to the upper end, nor Veeshnoo to the lower. A considerable number of pages, in this part, exhibit another most earnest, though unavailing effort to give a power of grand and religious impression to some of the silliest phantasms

of mythology. The sanctities of the true temple are rifled for the profane service; the attributes of the Deity are with most religious formality given to Seeva; and the poet is pertinaciously resolute that "intensity of faith and holiest love" shall be no distinctive qualities of Christian devotion. As an auspicious termination of the adventure, it is signified from Seeva to Ereenia, that he and his complainant friends must carry their suit to the throne of Yamen, where "all odds will be made even."

The sections ensuing, therefore, are intitled "The Embarkation" and "The World's End;" and relate, with extraordinary force of imagination, a voyage of the three friends across a dark stormy sea, which separates this world from the next—the emotions of the two human adventurers—the landing on an "icy belt"—and the appearances of the various classes of ghosts, there waiting to be carried down by demons, through a dark lake, to the place of judgment. Much of this gloomy vision is presented with little less pointed specificity, if we may so express it, of circumstance, and little less intensity of colouring, than the following description.

"Then might be seen who went in hope, and who
 Trembled to meet the meed
 Of many a foul misdeed, as wild they threw
 Their arms retorted from the demon's grasp,
 And looked around, all eagerly, to seek
 For help, where help was none; and strove for aid
 To clasp the nearest shade;
 Yea, with imploring looks and horrent shriek,
 Even from one demon to another bending,
 With hands extending,
 Their mercy they essayed.
 Still from the verge they strain,
 And from the dreadful gulph avert their eyes,
 In vain; down plunge the demons, and their cries
 Feebly, as down they sink, from that profound arise."—p. 125.

Ereenia takes Kailyal first, and afterwards her father, down through the lake to the southern gate of Padalon. In the moment of preparing for this formidable plunge with the first, he addresses her in language containing a

parody which cannot be lost on the readers of the gospels :

“ Be of good heart, beloved ! it is I
Who bear thee.”—

Arrived at the gate, they are assailed by terrific sounds, and receive, from the giant god that guards it, a most appalling description of the essential, and of the present occasional state of Padalon ; for, it seems, the confident expectation of Kehama's acquiring the dominion of hell as well as heaven, has excited among the wicked spirits, throughout the whole infernal dominion, such a dreadful insurrectional fury, that even Yamen trembles on his throne ; while *they* are invoking, with thundering clamours, the Rajah to set them free with his “ irresistible right hand,”—a hand, be it remembered, constructed of a few ounces of bone and flesh. The warden god furnishes the two mortals with incombustible robes, as a protection in passing through the region of fire, and a one-wheeled chariot, which, self-directed, carries the adventurers over a vast bridge, as sharp as the edge of a scimitar, which spans the sea of fire that encircles Padalon.

They pass on through a horrible scene of torment, and rage, and tumult, till they come to the metropolis of Yamen, who is found seated on a marble sepulchre, with Baly on a judgment-seat, at his feet : and

“ A golden throne before them vacant stood ;
Three human forms sustained its ponderous weight,
With lifted hands outspread, and shoulders bowed,
Bending beneath their load ;
A fourth was wanting. They were of the hue
Of walls of fire ; yet were they flesh and blood,
And living breath they drew ;
And their red eye-balls rolled with ghastly stare,
As thus, for their misdeeds they stood tormented there.”—p. 251.

Yamen bids them wait with patience the awful hour appointed to decide the fate of Padalon and the universe. which hour, he says, is fast approaching. And so it proves ; for even while he is speaking, the hideous up-

roar sinks in a silence much more portentous and terrible. Shortly this silence gives place to a distant sound, which is soon perceived to be advancing and deepening. It is nothing less than the approach of Kehama; who, multiplying or dividing himself into eight distinct persons, has invaded Padalon by its eight different gates, all at one moment; comes driving on furiously in eight chariots; invests the infernal god; and, after a dreadful but short conflict, places his foot triumphantly on his neck. He dallies awhile with his new power, to feel the triumph more exquisitely; but soon imperiously demands the Amreeta, for himself and Kailyal. A "huge Anatomy" rises from the marble tomb, and presents the cup. He drinks, and becomes the fourth tormented and immortal statue, under the "golden throne." Then Kailyal drinks, is transformed into a perfectly ethereal being, and is rapturously welcomed by Ereenia as now his equal and immortal companion. Ladurlad is dismissed by a gentle death to meet them, and the happy spirit of his wife, in the Swerga

The preceding abstract has so far exceeded all reasonable bounds, and has so often digressed into comments, that the observations we may wish to add must be allowed to occupy but a very small space. They can indeed do little else than assert, in a somewhat more general form, several of the principles which we have ventured to apply here and there to the work, in passing along.

We must repeat then, in the first place, our censure of the adoption or creation of so *absurd* a fable. It is little enough, to be sure, that we know of the order of the universe. But yet human reason, after earnest and indefatigable efforts of inquiry, through several thousands of years, (during a great part of which period the inquiry has been prosecuted under the advantage of a revelation,) finds itself in possession of a few general principles which may, without presumption, be deemed to inhere in, and regulate the universal system: — insomuch that these principles

would be very confidently assigned, by thinking men, as reasons for disbelieving a great many propositions that might be advanced, relative to the moral or the physical order of the creation, or any of its parts,—relative to the economy of any supposed class of intelligent beings. And in proportion as we withdraw from the immensity of this subject, and bring our thoughts near this world of our own, we find ourselves authorized to apply still more principles, and to reject or to affirm still more propositions relative to beings that, if they exist at all, must exist according to an order in many points analogous to our own economy. Let it be assumed, for instance, that there are inhabitants in the moon, and we shall be warranted on the ground of the various circumstances of the analogy between their place of abode and ours, to advance a great deal more in the way of probable conjecture respecting their economy, than we could respecting an order of beings, our only *datum* concerning which should be, that whatever and wherever it is, its condition has less resemblance to our own than that of any other race of intelligent creatures. But when we come actually to this world, and men are the subjects of our thoughts, we know our ground completely; and can compare the descriptions and fictitious representations of the nature and condition of man, with the plain standard fact. It should be added, that our knowledge of what are called the laws of matter, reaches far further into the universe than our knowledge of the economy of intelligent existences: and therefore we may be allowed to make very confident assertions respecting, for instance, the qualities and powers of fire and water, in the remotest and most singular world in which those elements exist, while we might be exceedingly diffident and limited in our guesses concerning the supposed intelligent inhabitants of that world.

Now this degree of knowledge which we have acquired of the physical and moral order of the creation, has become a standard of probability for the works of imagination. If those fictions conform to the arrange-

ments of this order, as far as they are ascertained, or reasonably inferred from general principles, they are pronounced probable: but if in contrariety to these arrangements, they must be pronounced — not improbable merely, but absurd:—except, indeed, when they are legitimately representing what we call miracles; and as miracles are the works of God only—the *true* God—they can never be legitimately represented as operations of fictitious and pagan divine powers. Improbable fictions, we repeat, should be held absurd; for, surely, the actual economy of the creation, as arranged by its Author, must be the grand prototype of wise and beautiful design—of all the adaptation, proportions, and congruities constituting, or conducing to the perfection of the whole system of existence. Indeed there could be no other model from which to draw our ideas of proportion, adaptation, harmony, and whatever else is meant by the term order, than this created system, unless the Creator had revealed another model, an ideal model, existing in his infinite mind, widely different from the actual creation. We therefore cannot represent material and intellectual existences of a nature, or in relations and combinations, inconsistent with the known laws of the creation, without violating the only true principles of order which it is possible for us to conceive. This we are forced practically to acknowledge in all our judgments on the propriety or absurdity of the creations of fancy; for it is to these laws that we necessarily advert, in pronouncing the representations made by the imagination in dreaming, delirium, and insanity, to be absurd; and it is only on their authority that we can pronounce any thing absurd, except what involves a metaphysical contradiction. Unless the absolute authority of these laws is acknowledged, it shall be perfectly reasonable for a poet to represent a race of people made of steel, or half steel half flesh—or human heads, as in the illuminations of old manuscripts, growing on twigs of trees—or one man making himself into eight, like Kehama, and then returning into one again—or fire and water in perfect amity. It is, in short, only

in deference to these laws of the creation, that we can be excused for refusing our respect and admiration to the infinite puerility and monstrosity of the Hindoo poets as they are called. Now a very considerable portion of the fictions, constituting the present poem, is constructed in utter defiance of this standard. The whole affair of the operation of the curse, the story of Lorrinite, the origination of the Ganges, the fire and water palace of Indra, the adventures of Mount Calasy, the transactions and creatures of Padalon, with much more that has been noticed in the analysis, are things of a nature not only in perfect contrariety to the state and laws of the actual creation, but incompatible with any economy of which we can conceive the *possible* existence. A strong, an irresistible impression of flagrant absurdity will, therefore, be the predominant perception of every reader incapable of a temporary abolition of his reason. The disgust at this absurdity will be so very active a feeling, and will be so seldom suffered by the poet to subside, that it will, at many parts of the work, almost wholly preclude the pleasure that would else be imparted by the splendid scenery and eloquent diction by which even the grossest of the absurdities are attempted to be made imposing. We may wonder, in very simplicity, why the poet should choose deliberately to labour to excite at once the two opposite sentiments of pleasure and disgust, with the knowledge, too, that any attempt to prolong them both is infallibly certain to end in the ascendancy of the latter. Or does he really think the beauties of his composition are so transcendent, that they will banish all recollection about probability and improbability, or fairly vanquish the repugnance of cultivated minds to gross absurdity? And if he *could* do this, what would be the value of the achievement? What has been the grand object and utility of observing, of investigating, of philosophizing through all ages, but to put mankind in possession of TRUTH, and to discipline their minds to love truth, to think according to the just laws of thinking, and to hate all fallacy and absurdity;—in short, to advance the

human race at last, if it be possible, to something like the manhood of reason? And would it, then, be a meritorious employment of a genius that really *should* be powerful enough to counteract these exertions, and retard this progress, to reduce the human mind, or any one mind, back to a state in which it could love or tolerate puerile or raving absurdity,—to that very state which the generality of the orientals are in at this day, and for being in which they have, (till lately their paganism has recommended them to our favour,) been the objects of our sovereign contempt? But if all our influential poetry were to be of the same character as that of a large portion of the present work, we might justly regard the poetic tribe as a conspiracy to seduce men into a complacency with what involves a total abjuration of sense, and so to defeat the labours for maturing the human understanding,—labours, verily, of which the toil is great enough, and the success little enough, even unobstructed by such intervention.

There can be no danger, we suppose, of hearing pleaded in maintenance of the privilege of poetry to be absurd, that the scope of probability is too confined to afford sufficient variety of materials. That scope includes nothing less than all that is known of this whole world,—all that may, in strict analogy with what is known, be conjectured or fancied of it, in times past, present, and to come,—and all that can be imagined of all other worlds, without violating what we have reason to believe the principles of the order of the creation, and without contradicting any doctrine of revelation. This scope is therefore, in the popular sense of the word, infinite; and to seek for materials which it does not include, will generally be found an indication of a feeble mind. It is quite needless to say, this remark can have no application to Mr. Southey: but it is a remark applicable to him, that such feeble minds will be glad to find and plead a warrant for their folly in the example of a strong one.

After all, it would be foolish to affect any great degree of apprehension for the public taste, from the perverting

operation of one, or any number of works, attempting to reconcile it to the kind and excess of absurdity exhibited in this poem, even if all such works had all the poetical excellence so conspicuous in this. There is a point in the improvement both of individuals and communities, after which they cannot be even amused to more than a certain latitude, if we may so express it, from the line of their reason.

The next chief point of censure would be, that this absurdity is also *paganism*; but this has been noticed so pointedly and repeatedly in our analysis, that a very few words here will suffice. There are Marriataly, Pollear, Yama, Indra, Veeshnoo, Seeva, Padalon, the Swerga, &c. &c., celebrated in the most Christianized country of Europe, by a native poet. Now if these had been merely the fictions of his own mind, and not parts of a heathen mythology, even then they would have been, as they are here managed, an unpardonable violation of religious rectitude. For (the truth of the religion of the bible being assumed) the poet has no right to frame, with a view to engage our complacency in, such a fictitious economy of divine and human beings as, if it could be real, would constitute the negation or extinction of that religion. But the present fiction, so far and so long as the force of poetry (which the poet would have augmented indefinitely if he could) can render the illusion prevalent on the mind, is not only the making void of the true religion, and the substitution of another and a vile theology in its place; it is no less than the substitution of a positive and notorious system of *paganism*. It vacates the eternal throne, not only in order to raise thither an imaginary divinity, but absolutely to elevate Seeva, the adored abomination of the Hindoos. He is as much, and as gravely attempted to be represented as a reality, as he could be by the poets of those heathens themselves. And, as if on purpose to preclude the officiousness of any friend that might wish to palliate or justify this proceeding, by the old pretendedly philosophical allegation, that this is only accommodating so far to another division of the human race, as to apply the name under which *they*

worship a supreme being, to the Supreme Being that *we* somewhat more intelligently worship,—as if expressly to forbid any such apology, and to give proof that what he is endeavouring to gain a place for in our minds is genuine and formal heathenism, he has given an equally grave semblance of reality to a variety of other gods as well as Seeva, and to the pagan heaven and hell. These, at any rate, are disclaimed even by that irreligious philosophy that insults revelation with the pretence that it may be, in truth, the same divine Essence that is worshipped “by saint, by savage, or by sage” under the varied denominations of “Jehovah, Jove, Lord,” or Seeva. These systematic appendages and connexions, therefore, verify the paganism of the whole theology of this poem. And to this paganism, the poet has most earnestly laboured, as we have before observed and shown, to transfer what is peculiar to the true theology. Expressions of awful reverence, and ascriptions of divine attributes to Seeva, are uttered by the poet in his own person; he studies most solicitously to give every appearance and every epithet of dignity to the worship represented as rendered to the gods by Ladurlad, Kailyal, and Ereenia; and the fidelity to this devotion at length attains an eternal reward. Now we have only to ask, What was the impression which the poet wished all these combined and co-operating representations to make on the reader’s mind? He will not say, nor any one for him, that he was unaware that a certain moral effect necessarily accompanies all striking representations of moral agents, and that all he reckoned on, in a work of great and protracted effort, was to present simply a series of images, chasing one another away, like those in a magic lanthorn, or like the succession of clouds in the sky, making no impression on the mind but merely that of their splendour, beauty, or monstrosity. Aware then of a moral effect, and intending it, did he design that effect should be hostile in the severest manner to heathenism? Throughout this exhibition of gods, providences, devotions, heavens, and hells, was it a leading purpose to make the reader detest the fancies about Indra and Seeva, and the Swerga and

Padalon, and pray that such execrable delusions might be banished from those millions of minds in which they are entertained as something more than poetry ? For any purpose of this kind, the means, evidently, would not be at all of the nature of those he has employed. He most clearly had no intention that his Seeva, his Indra, his Yama, his Baly, and so forth, should appear to the reader in the full odiousness, or any degree of the odiousness, of the character of false gods ; and that the reader should recoil with abhorrence at all his devotional sentiments towards these divinities. But it is then to be believed, that he was content or desirous that his bold conceptions, his fine painting, his rich language, should lend the whole of that powerful assistance which he knows such things contribute, by necessary association, in behalf of whatever they are employed to exhibit and embellish,—to render false gods and their worship, and so much more of a most execrable system of paganism as the poem allowed room for admitting, *agreeable* objects to the reader's imagination, and as far as possible *interesting* to his affections ? We do not see how the poet is to be acquitted of this, unless, as we observed before, we could suppose so absurd a thing, as that he should regard his work as a mere piece of scenery, displaying fine colours and strange shapes, without any moral tendency at all. It is possible our author may have in his own mind some mode of explaining and justifying such a conduct, and that without a rejection of rational theism or revealed religion ; with either of which degrees of disbelief we are very far from thinking he is chargeable. But the very least that a Christian critic can say in such a case is, that no man, *rightly* impressed with the transcendent idea of a Supreme Being, and with the unspeakable folly and danger of trifling with the purity and integrity, and sporting away, in any the smallest degree, the awfulness of that idea, could have written this work, or can read it without displeasure and regret.

It was to be foreseen that sooner or later, one of the many enterprizes of genius would be a very formal and strenuous attempt to confer English popularity on the

Hindoo gods. It was a thing not to be endured, that, while we are as proud as Kehama of possessing India, we should not be able to bring to the augmentation of our national splendour that which India itself deems its highest glory, its mythology. And since the attempt *was* to be made, we should be very glad it has been made by a poet, whose failure will be a permanent proof and monument of the utter desperateness of the undertaking, —if we did not regret that so much genius should have been sacrificed to such a contemptible purpose. The grave part of the regret is of the same kind with that which affects us at seeing Sir Thomas More surrender his life in devout assertion of the infallibility, and universal spiritual dominion, of an impious impostor, called the Pope. But there mingles with this regret the same strong perception of the ludicrous, as we should feel in seeing a fine British fleet, in full equipment and appointment, sent out to India just for the purpose of bringing back, each ship, a basket of the gods of crockery, or some portions of that material with which the Lama of Tibet is reported to enrich the craving hands of his devotees, and at length coming into the channel with flags flying, and their cannon thundering, in celebration of the cargo. Or if the reader has not enough of similes, we would compare the poet to an artist who, if such a thing were possible in any other art than poetry, should make choice of the most offensive substances, to be moulded with the utmost delicacy and beauty of workmanship, into forms which should excite a violent contest between the visual and olfactory senses, in which, however, the latter would be sure to be victorious.

After these observations on what we think the two mortal sins of this performance, absurdity and irreverence, subordinate remarks cannot claim room for an extension of this overgrown article. There is not any thing that can properly be called *character* in the work. Kehama is a personage so monstrous, that nothing extravagant could be said to be out of character in him. There is much ability evinced in giving Ladurlad more of what we can sympathize with, more of purely *human* dignity, amiableness, and distress, than would have been

supposed practicable in a representation of human beings under such strange and impossible circumstances. We need not say one word more of the wonderful power of description, displayed in every part of the poem. It appears with unabated vigour in the concluding canto or section, which exhibits Padalon, the Hindoo hell. This exhibition, however, has a kind of coarse hideousness, which would be very remote from any thing awful or sublime, even if it included much less of the clumsy, uncouth monstrosity of the Hindoo fables; and if the measureless power and terrors of Kehama, and his making himself into eight terrible gods, did not appear so insipidly and irksomely foolish. There is too much sameness of fire, steel, and adamant; and there is in the whole scene a certain flaring *nearness*, which allows no retirement of the imagination into wide, and dubious, and mysterious terrors. This puts it in unfortunate contrast with the infernal world of Milton, and the difference is somewhat like that between walking amidst a burning town, and in a region of volcanoes. We must not bring even into thought, any sort of comparison between the display of mind in Milton's infernal personages and those of Padalon.

The general diction of the work is admirably strong, and various, and free; and, in going through it, we have repeatedly exulted in the capabilities of the English language. The author seems to have in a great measure grown out of that affected simplicity of expression, of which he has generally been accused. The versification, as to measure and rhyme, is a complete defiance of all rule, and all example; the lines are of any length, from four syllables to fourteen; there are sometimes rhymes and sometimes none; and they have no settled order of recurrence. This is objectionable, chiefly, as it allows the poet to riot away in a wild wantonness of amplification, and at the very same time imposes on him the petty care of having the lines so printed, as to put the letter-press in the form of a well-adjusted picture.

The notes comprise a large assortment of curious particulars, relating to the eastern mythology and manners, and to natural history.

[July, 1811.]

Christian Researches in Asia ; with notices of the Translation of the Scriptures into Oriental Languages. By the Rev. CLAUDIUS BUCHANAN, D.D., late Vice-Provost of the College of Fort William in Bengal. 8vo.

To a certain proportion of the copies of this work are prefixed a "Sermon preached before the Society for Missions to Africa and the East, June 1810, and two Discourses before the University at Cambridge, July, 1810," by the author. The strong representations, in those discourses, of the duty of making a grand effort to diffuse the Christian religion over the world, were accompanied by brief notices,—very reasonably expressed in a spirit of great elation,—of the unparalleled exertions and progress of a few of our countrymen in Asia, in preparing the machinery for this operation on that continent and its islands ; and were enforced by allusions to what the preacher had personally witnessed of the happy effects of the true religion, and of the abominations and miseries of superstition, in a very extensive journey of research in those regions. He doubtless had previously intended, what every hearer and reader would be constrained to desire and urge, a publication of the most remarkable facts that came under his immediate inspection, or within his certain knowledge. This was indeed his indispensable duty,—and he has performed it in this most interesting volume ; with a brevity and compression, however, in some parts, that will leave every reader unsatisfied, at the same time that it will reflect credit on the literary moderation of the author, whose journal could so easily have supplied materials for a much larger book.—We will attempt a brief abstract of the contents of the volume, taking them in the order

of succession in which we find them, and obtruding but a very small quantity of any thing in the nature of commentary.

The work begins with some notices of the College of Fort William, which was founded May 1800, began its literary operations with great activity, and prosecuted them on a wide and still widening scale till 1806 ; at the end of which year the India Directors, alarmed at the great expense of the institution, reduced it within much narrower limits,—incompatible with those extensive schemes of biblical translation, in the execution of which it had been for some time co-operating with the missionaries at Serampore. The College, our author informs us, is restored to a “flourishing state, and has received the final sanction and patronage of the East India Company ;” but he does not state, whether its now consolidated constitution and means are such, as to enable it to resume its former designs in their whole extent. He seems, however, to have no doubt of its effectual acceptance of Dr. Leyden’s late offer to “superintend the translation of the Scriptures into *seven* languages, hitherto but little cultivated in India ; viz., Affghan, Cashmirian, Jaghatai, Siamese, Bugis, Macassar, and Maldivinian.

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All good men, and indeed some who are not good, but who are not therefore incapable of admiring magnificence of enterprise, will join our author in his animated applause of this perfectly heroic project ; a project at the same time quite clear of presumption, in a man possessing the talents and acquirements which we have observed to be unanimously attributed to Dr. Leyden, by his learned oriental contemporaries. It presents a striking view of the difference of employment among human beings, that, while there are some men of powerful mind tracing on the map, perhaps at this very hour, the utmost limit to which they can venture to assume the possibility of extending conquest and desolation, and feeling a most lofty exultation in the consciousness of being the presiding and directing spirits of the design, there should

be others who are daring to project a still more ambitious sweep of enterprize, against every thing which revealed religion can find to give battle to, within the compass of a million of square miles. It is little less striking to consider, that the former class of heroes regard the projects of the latter as, compared with their own, insignificant and contemptible; and that poets and historians, who are among the most effectual moral teachers, are sure to do all they can to give confirmation and popularity to this estimate.

After applauding the noble undertaking of this scholar, Dr. Buchanan addresses himself to both the better and the meaner sentiments, presumed to exist in the mind of another chief of the Indian literati.

"There are now several Orientalists, members of the Asiatic Society, who have been engaged in translating the Holy Scriptures. We hope, hereafter, to see the name of Mr. Colebrooke added to the number. Mr. Colebrooke is the Father of Sanscrit Literature, and has lately published an Essay on the Sanscrit *poetry* and *metres*. How much gratified should we be to see a version of the *Pentateuch* from his pen! or at least a critique on the New Testament, which has been already translated into Sanscrit. Mr. Colebrooke is the proper man to oppose the *Pentateuch* to the *Hindoo* Cosmogony, and to invite the Brahmins to contemplate the Mosaic records in classical Sanscrit. This would be a work worthy of his great erudition, and his name, as a Sanscrit scholar, would then, indeed, live for ever. Mr. Colebrooke has ever shown kindness to the humble missionaries, who have been cultivating the Sanscrit tongue; he has supplied them with books, and afforded them every liberal aid; and it will give him no regret, at his last hour, to think that he has had it in his power, in any degree, to promote the cause of Christianity."—p. 223.

It is indeed to be most earnestly desired, that this leader of the Oriental scholars may be induced to direct the main force of his accumulated means to co-operate in the hostility that is at last opening in earnest, and in so grand a style, against the most ancient, extensive, and consolidated empire of the gods. And yet to the zealously Christian agents in this great enterprise, it would be a very melancholy reflection, that they owed this able co-operation to the irreligious principle which our author has here endeavoured to animate into a motive. It may even be doubted, whether the palpable

contrariety of the quality of this motive to the nature of the great cause intended to be promoted by its stimulation, will not render an energetic co-operation impossible. For surely a man of intelligence and some degree of conscience, in labouring, for the sake of renown among his fellow-mortals, to extend the knowledge and influence of the divine oracles, will feel a deadly damp on his ardour when he perceives, that every successive page he is interpreting or elucidating, contains something which, either expressly or virtually, reprobates the motive by which he is conscious of being actuated in these very labours.

The manner in which Dr. Buchanan here alludes to the Baptist missionaries, calls for a slight notice, in passing. If the epithet "*humble*" were a word of perfectly unequivocal meaning, synonymous with modest or unassuming,—if it were expressive simply of the reverse of ostentation and arrogance, and competently descriptive of the character of persons who, while they should be accomplishing great things, should speak of them in a language of the utmost moderation,—then, no epithet was ever more properly applied than this would be in the above passage. But it is needless to say that the word is often employed in a very different sense; and whoever observes the cautious parsimony of our author's allusions to the missionaries,—the coolness of his style when the mention of them is unavoidable,—and the management to place them in the back ground, when their labours are to be mentioned in connexion with those of other distinguished oriental scholars, will be inclined to admit the suspicion, that the epithet "*humble*" is here applied in that sense, in which it intimates a certain degree of disparagement. Nor will this suspicion be lessened, by the reader's observing what immense importance Dr. Buchanan constantly attaches to the point of securing an active and engrossing predominance to our established church and its members, in the whole economy of Indian Christianity,—especially if, in addition, this reader should have heard of some circumstances in the intercourse of the reverend author with

the missionaries. Should it be a correct surmise, that the expression in question conveys some sentiment of undervaluation and supercilious condescension, it will not be worth while to remark on the want of *equity* betrayed in such a sentiment; since this defect of justice will be perfectly harmless to the feelings and the interests of the missionaries. But it *may* be worth while, we should think, as regarding Dr. Buchanan himself, to caution him against the *impolicy* of employing, relative to these men, and their operations, a diction tending to convey any other estimate, than that which will be fixed in the permanent award of learning and Christianity. And that history, in describing, among the great modern novelties, the scheme of Asiatic biblical translation, which is now becoming so magnificent both in its practical progress and in its promises, will have to record that with these men the attempt began; insomuch that, in all human probability, the Bible would not, but for them, have been accessible to one man of several hundred millions, to whom it will be accessible before the termination of the lives of these identical missionaries. The history will at the same time state, and cannot avoid the necessity of stating, that this great design was not, as many other great designs have been, much more indebted for its efficacy and execution to other agents, subsequently drawn into the employment, than to the originators themselves; but that those who formed it, began and prosecuted its execution on an extent, and with a rapidity, evincing that they were likely (a moderate prolongation of life being granted) to accomplish the greater part of the project, even though they should have no coadjutors or successors. Nor will the account stop here; but go on to relate that they continued to be the active leaders through all the stages of the progress thus far, and very probably, that this precedency devolved, after their decease, to their sons, who are likely to have no superiors in the qualifications for carrying forward the great work. The history will assign to the names of these missionaries, that high and perpetual distinction

always conceded as due to those, who accomplish the first successful achievement in a new province. The increasing knowledge and accuracy of the Indian school will progressively supply valuable means for adding the last new improvements to these works ; but to have been the first to undertake and finish such important labours in several languages, is to have pre-occupied the highest ground. We will just add, that history will also testify that these men, while gladly acceding to all liberal plans of co-operation, and accepting every kind of assistance with all thankfulness, and even "humility," did, notwithstanding, maintain a very dignified spirit of independence, and rejected instantly any proposals of such modes of coalition with the projects of other Europeans, as would have merged their well-organized system, and controled their operations.

We are not to be understood as implying, in this cautionary hint to the Doctor, that he has used with respect to the missionaries, in this or his other works, any terms of a directly depreciating nature, excepting so far as the one we have particularly noted is such. But we read with a very perverted apprehension, if there is not a systematical avoidance to give due prominence of representation to their energy, their talents, and their performances ; if there is not an obvious disposition to throw a fuller, richer light on the exertions, even the much more limited and less important exertions, of other scholars ; if there are not, in short, some indications of a sectarian feeling, that it is far from pleased that persons not connected with the Church of England should have obtained a precedence, from which they can never be displaced in the biblical literature of the East. Even the formal expressions of applause have certain qualified turns and touches, that will not escape the attention of a reader whose vigilance is a little excited. Mentioning Dr. Carey and Mr. Marshman (p. 225) Dr. Buchanan says, "two men whose names will *probably* go down to the latest posterity in India, as faithful translators of the Holy Scriptures." The adverb of uncertainty might as pertinently have been introduced, we suppose, into an

assertion of the perpetuity of the fame of Wickliffe, Tindal, Luther, and so forth, in Europe. And it is curious to compare this with the full, broad, and half poetical terms in which, in the passage we have extracted, the everlasting remembrance is assured to Mr. Colebrooke, on the condition of his translating the Pentateuch into Sanscrit, after, and even at any distance after, the missionaries have translated the New Testament into that language; "his name, as a Sanscrit scholar would then, indeed, live for ever." We are far from wishing to press this point unfairly; but, viewing the subject in the most impartial light, we are compelled to think, that our author assigns but a scanty tribute of applause to men whose names will be classed throughout all ages with the world's best benefactors; men whose works speak for them in candid ears with an energy that will bear them up, whatever means of diminishment may be employed by those, to whom we may devoutly wish a larger portion of magnanimity.

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Our attention is next directed to the Hindoos, whose moral and religious condition the Doctor proposes to place in contrast with that of the native Christians, in the southern part of the peninsula. And certainly he could not have taken a more effectual way to qualify himself for exhibiting the first of the two pictures, than to visit the grand metropolitan temple of Jaggernaut* in Orissa, at the time of the great annual festival,—celebrated by an assemblage of many hundreds of thousands of persons of both sexes, and all ages and castes, drawn from all parts of India. He gives from his journal a selection of most striking descriptions; from which our room, however, will not admit of considerable extract, and of which the whole is so compressed, and every part so essential, as to preclude the possibility of any satisfactory abridgment.—The series of description begins at a station called Buddruck.

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* He writes it *Jaggernaut*. There is no end of the capricious variations in the European orthography of this and other leading denominations of the Indian superstition.

When our author advanced with the crowd toward the outer gate of the "town of Juggernaut," (we are not informed in what sense and extent the place is a town,) a great number of the pilgrims pushed tumultuously round him, in order to enter by force, without paying the appointed tax, when the gate should be opened for him by the guard of soldiers stationed on the inside. He was warned of the danger too late for him to displace himself from the head of this dense and impetuous column; which rushed irresistibly forward on the opening of the gate, impelling him violently before it, and choking up the entrance in such a manner, that he believed numbers would have been crushed to death if one of the wooden posts had not given way and fallen to the ground. The British superintendent sent additional soldiers to guard the inner gate, and afterwards informed our author that such tumultuous irruptions were no novelty to him, and that numbers had been crushed to death on such occasions. And, assuredly, there is not another scene on earth, where a spectator would be so likely to regard fatal accidents as of trivial account. The multitude of human beings, or rather, waste quantity of human being,—the inexpressible debasement in which, in point of reason and moral sentiment, they are all sunk and equalized,—the perfect indifference about one another's life or death, prevailing to the exclusion of all the combining sympathies of charity throughout so vast and condensed an assemblage, and letting the individual atoms appear, by this selfish disjunction, in a littleness and insignificance exactly in inverse proportion to the vastness of the mass;—the indifference, too, which many of them show as to their own lives,—the immense quantity of useless and vile action brought into one view, by the convention of so many myriads of befooled living creatures,—the personal squalidness of a large proportion of them,—and the offensiveness of the place to all the senses:—All this together must, beyond any other exhibition within the reach of even Satanic contrivance, tend to make human nature, (at least the Hindoo portion of it) both in its physical and moral part, appear a worthless thing, little better than a nuisance in the creation.

A cultivated, but irreligious European, obliged to behold this spectacle a few years successively, would come to regard the bodies and souls of such people as of little more value than the weeds and shell-fish thrown on the beach, near which this hideous fane is built; and the estimate of the most pious one, would involuntarily and perpetually utter itself in the expression, "Hast Thou made all men in vain?"

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The precincts of the god's habitation are so intolerably noisome from filth, putrefaction,* and various loathsome sights which our author briefly mentions, as to compel the English gentlemen who are stationed here, and whom he names, to reside on the shore, at a distance of more than a mile from the temple. Their refined society was peculiarly grateful to him, under the oppression of spirits caused by the scene. In this point, however, they had no sympathetic feeling. "I was surprised," he says, "to see how little they seemed to be moved by the scenes of Juggernaut. They said they were now so accustomed to them, they thought little of them. They had almost forgot their first impressions."

The 18th of June was the grand day. "At twelve o'clock this day, the Moloch of Hindostan was brought out of his temple amidst the acclamations of hundreds of thousands of his worshippers. When the idol was placed on his throne, a shout was raised by the multitude, such as I had never heard before. It continued equable for a few minutes, and then gradually died away." After an act of worship by a party of men who presented themselves before the idol with green branches, there was another prodigious shout, or rather, as our author says, "yell of approbation, united with a kind of *hissing*." This latter part of the sound was made by the women, "with the lips circular, and the tongue vibrating, as if a serpent would speak by their organs."

And what, at last, is that transcendent object which

* Dr. Buchanan thinks, that only the vicinity of the sea could prevent such a contagion, as would make a sacrifice to the god in a style surpassing all preceding offerings.

can attract rational beings from all parts of a vast region, bring them to a concentrated mass of many hundreds of thousands, and, by presenting itself to their sight, elevate their spirits to a most ardent universal frenzy, in spite of the exhaustion from their toilsome pilgrimages, and of the famine and death prevailing with hourly aggravation among them? Probably the whole creation may not contain, on so prodigious a scale in point of numbers, within such narrow local limits, another instance of such a power of delusion—of such perversity of intellectual natures. The object which excites to delirium more, perhaps, than half a million of minds at one moment in one place, is—a clumsily carved log of wood! While however the god, taken distinctly, seems formed in defiance of all the principles according to which we should calculate on a grand and irresistible impression on the imagination, it must be acknowledged that some of the secondary parts of the exhibition are tolerably well adapted to command at least a Hindoo's imagination, to which nothing is so sublime as huge bulk. It is with great propriety, that this "lord of the world" comes out on a chariot which fairly beats out of comparison the state coaches of all other gods and potentates.

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As the idol advanced, Dr. Buchanan moved on with the crowd, under an impression of horror at the diabolical character of the scene. The car repeatedly stopped, to allow an interval for the priests and other ministers of the god, stationed aloft near his throne, to recite verses and perform rites, the nature of which our author could not do more than hint in general language. He felt, he says, some degree of guilt in continuing a spectator. There will probably appear no just cause for this sentiment, when the importance is considered of our having an intelligent *Christian* evidence to the real and exact nature of this "religion," the projects for attempting to enlighten and withdraw the votaries of which have recently excited such a burst of rage in this country; a rage that has left all its malice still smouldering, amidst the mortification from defeated effort and falsified pre-

diction. A partial and temporary suspension of the customary laws of decorum, both in beholding and relating, if ever permissible, would have been so—for the purpose of placing in broad European daylight, that which is, confessedly, the most “sacred” and triumphant exhibition, within the whole compass of a system, which has obtained among us so many avowals of veneration, and for applying to which even the plain scriptural terms concerning idolatry, Christian missionaries have been called bigots and madmen. But the propriety of having a witness, who has qualified himself by a full and recent inspection, will be still more obvious, when a fact is mentioned which Dr. Buchanan states most explicitly at the close of this account of Juggernaut, and which we shall take a future occasion to remark upon.

The impression of horror, and the sense of guilt, grew so strong on our observer, that he was on the point of getting away, when he was arrested and detained by a new turn in the worship.

“After the tower had proceeded some way, a pilgrim announced that he was ready to offer himself a sacrifice to the idol. He laid himself down in the road before the tower as it was moving along, lying on his face, with his arms stretched forwards. The multitude passed round him, leaving the space clear, and he was crushed to death by the wheels of the tower. A shout of joy was raised to the god. He is said to *smile* when the libation of the blood is made. The people threw cowries, or small money, on the body of the victim, in approbation of the deed. He was left to view a considerable time, and was then carried by the *Hurries* to the Golgotha, where I have just been viewing his remains. How much I wished that the proprietors of India Stock could have attended the wheels of Juggernaut, and seen this peculiar source of their revenue.”
—p. 27.

There can be no doubt that they would to a man, Mr. Twining not excepted, be eager for the reduction of their dividend, by so much as might be found to accrue from this and the similar sources of their revenue.

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[July, 1811.]

Select Letters of Tippoo Sultan to various Public Functionaries: including his principal Military Commanders; Governors of Forts and Provinces; Diplomatic and Commercial Agents; &c. &c. &c. Together with one addressed to the Tributary Chieftains of Shânsoor, Kurnool, and Cannanore, and sundry other Persons. Arranged and translated by WILLIAM KIRKPATRICK, Colonel in the Service of the Honourable East-India Company. With Notes and Observations, and an Appendix, containing several original Documents never before published. 4to.

A CONSIDERABLE part of the public records of the Mysore government was burnt, during the tumult and disorder attending the storm of Seringapatam, in 1799. A considerable part fell into the hands of various individuals of the victorious party, and was preserved: not, however, with the most solicitous care, for Colonel Kirkpatrick suspects, that some documents, that were saved in the first instance, may have perished, or at least disappeared, through the misfortune of being in the possession "of private persons, ignorant of the value, and indifferent to the preservation of their prize,"—while those that have been finally secured, for the benefit of all future time, owe their preservation chiefly to the active and intelligent research of a military officer. Among these is a Register of the Sultan's Letters, from which the correspondence contained in the present volume has been extracted, and of which the translator has still in his possession a sufficient number to furnish, even after a due selection, another volume. He has, moreover, other materials of a similar quality, which we think the public may venture to believe are not put under an inviolable seal of eternal secrecy. Nay, "it may still perhaps, be permitted us to hope," continues the translator, that a mass of *other* documents of the same nature, in the possession of the authorities who are in possession of India,

“may at no distant period be submitted to the public eye :”—And all this immense contribution, here made, and hereafter to be made, to the public benefit, is only of the nature of a supplement to large communications of the inestimable Mysore state papers, previously conveyed “through official and other channels.”

The statement holding forth this review and prospect, is made with all imaginable seriousness,—and abounds with epithets and phrases expressive of the great reason the English public has for self-gratulation, for eagerness, and for hope. It is said that “the possession of the archives of Seringapatam is among other inestimable advantages of the most important and durable nature,” for which we are indebted to Marquis Wellesley. “Precious documents”—“valuable documents”—“interesting materials”—are the expressions by which it is signified to us, how much of the means of our happiness and illumination were once locked up in the boxes of a vile Mahometan chieftain of a division of the Indian peninsula. We must not trust ourselves to think what would have become of us, if instead of only part of these rich materials, a malignant conjunction of the stars had consigned them all to the flames.

It is quite confounding to observe, how completely very sensible men, in their attention to some one district of the world, and to the creatures of note that have there “fretted their hour,” can forget that any other districts of it have, during the same time, been kept in a tumult, by the frettings of other personages of note, who have also written orders to their subordinates, have had their archives and their historians, and have not wanted for persons to assume gravely in print, that it would be a mighty advantage to the public to be shown—what had, perhaps, been preserved from destruction and oblivion by some almost miraculous good fortune—the trifling arcana of a transient and now almost forgotten despotism. By what unaccountable partiality of sight, can it happen, that, while the number of mortals making, at one time, a noise and a commotion,

during any part of the last quarter of a century, has been so great,—it should not occur to a person, who undertakes to edit out any one of them in history, correspondence, and fragment, that a similar claim on the public attention, will infallibly be made for each of all the rest of these worthies; and that readers are mortal men, of circumscribed faculties—and not even endowed with the cameleon's power of traversing one thing with one eye, and another thing at the same time with the other? We suppose the present editor sincerely believes, that a great number of persons are to be found in England with leisure and curiosity enough to peruse, relative to Tippoo and his government, a mass of writing which ninety-nine readers out of a hundred would think too large, even for a history of Europe for the last twenty years. To such individuals as may be qualifying themselves to write, and to the almost equally small number who are intent on accurately studying, the modern history of India, the present volume will no doubt be indispensable; and it will be a very proper addition to the libraries of those, who are gratified to have every thing in the furniture of their sumptuous apartments to remind them of the country where they acquired their wealth, and of the vanquished tyrant whose bands they may have met in battle. To some of these persons it may well be a very great luxury to read, in their parlours, and to their friends, in the Sultan's own words, those very schemes and orders which they themselves frustrated, those confidentially hinted villanies which they detected before he could complete them, those notices of revenues by which they were destined to be enriched more than the exactor, and those expressions of contempt for the English, of which they so effectually evinced the folly. But to the reading public in general, we suppose there is not one of the names that attained notoriety during the last century, *less* interesting now than that of Tippoo Sultan. It is not improbable, that an authenticated volume of confidential letters of Paul Jones, the pirate, would attract five times

as many readers as these performances of the royal hero, who, but a few years since, maintained so formidable a competition with us for the dominion of India.

His fame, and whatever fame is connected with his, is sinking fast under that wonderful fatality which consigns to the profoundest indifference, and almost to oblivion, all the signal personages, transactions, and British triumphs in that country. Never, probably, since the beginning of time, did objects of such ostensible magnitude, excite so little general interest in cultivated society. There has been no deficiency of European zeal to contest or counterwork this fatality. Historians of various classes, and orators and poets of many ranks, vexed and astonished at this subsidence of things of such prodigious bulk, and superficial splendour, almost out of sight, have joined in a strenuous self-devotement to raise and keep them up to at least the same level of interest and fame, as that held by the mighty matters of the western world,—the monarchs, tyrants, plots, fights, conquests, and so forth. And they have paid the forfeit of their resistance to fate, by sinking into a participation of the doom; their performances having been regarded with much of the same indifference as their subjects. The far greater portion of the writings, indeed, may have been such, in point of literary merit, as would have failed of popularity, *whatever* had been their subject: but some of them must owe it to their *inauspicious* subject, that we may meet in succession a hundred persons of tolerable information and taste that have never seen them. For instance, how few mere general readers know any thing more than barely the name of Mr. Orme? Whereas, had an equal share of literary merit to that displayed in his “History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan,” been employed to attract the public attention to almost any other series of military transactions, on a tolerably large scale,—a work would have been produced which it would have been discreditable to a man, but moderately conversant with books, not to have read. Even a history, so written, of the American War, would—in spite of the

homeliness, and the ungraciousness to English people, of the subject—have been read by at least ten times as many persons, as ever did or will read Mr. Orme's elegant and classical work. It remains to be seen, whether the very pompous but very forlorn subject of modern India, is destined ever to find, or to fee a historian of such stupendous talents, as to be able to make the reading populace, or even the more regularly cultivated classes, of this country, seriously betake themselves to inquire and talk about Moguls, and Rajahs, and Durbars, and Musnuds.

The bulk of the nation has never really attached any great importance to India as the field of British exploits and acquisition. Our high sounding victories there—the train of which began about the middle of last century—after their temporary eclat was past, were estimated rather according to the mental and bodily imbecility of the undisciplined crowds, that three or four hundred English could so soon drive into rivers and bogs, than according to the prodigious disproportion of numbers. The impression soon came to be, that if five hundred could beat five thousand, they might just as well beat ten, or twenty thousand. We acquired such a contemptuous idea of the native armies, that we were but barely just to the very distinguished talent and valour by which they were dispersed;—and what we mainly applauded our troops for, was their patience of heat, and musquitos, and rains, and bog-vapours.

Nor was the contempt entertained for the Asiatics as enemies, averted from them by their becoming subjects. When, towards the latter part of the century, we heard of so many millions, and only the next year so many millions more having come under the British dominion, there was but a very slight and very brief elation felt by any one who was clear of all connexion with the government and the Company. It was hardly thought an excessive strain of carping to ask, Why do you not also reckon into the account the idols and the cows which these millions of your subjects acknowledge as

their betters? The incessant rapid augmentation of the number has not raised the estimate, any more than in the case of bank notes : and, in effect, they are very tolerably parallel, as subjects, to the paper currency as money,—the more of them and the worse. So that now, none but the most ignorant or interested can hear of our “vast and growing empire in Asia,”—or fifty, sixty, or as some must have it, seventy millions of oriental subjects, without a sensation of disgust that asks, What is the use to us of all this empire and these subjects. We know in the abstract, that things of real value are not gained at such a prodigious rate ; and we are made to know as a matter of fact, that our great Indian empire has been a heavy and increasing load on our comparatively little English nation. The state establishment that presides over this little, and that vast empire, is something like an Indian Rajah, who should be found making a grand military or civil progress, with a due complement, indeed, of ordinary cattle, such as horses and bullocks, in his train, but also with a monstrous pair of elephants—the elephants, however, being dead, but to please the Rajah, being ordered to be drawn along by the other tired beasts, which have all the while their own burdens on their backs. We need not suggest that, in addition, the elephants may be in a state to convey infection and putridity all around them.

But even if this immense population, instead of the debility for which we so soon learnt to hold them light, had been distinguished by a character as lofty as that of the old Greeks or Romans—the pride of having brought such a people under our dominion must, in a nation hopelessly sinking every year deeper in debt and taxes, have given place by degrees to a bitter mortification, on finding, in process of time, that this vast oriental empire not only yielded no revenue in aid and relief of our domestic and European expenses and distresses, but was obstinately drawing away a very material portion of our resources, and at every new acquisition of territory leaving still less hope of revenue, or of even bare repayment. For a middling island of handicraftsmen, trades-

men, and farmers, at the north-western extremity of Europe, to take possession of an immense country of emperors and nabobs in Asia, just for the purpose of contributing with painful difficulty a portion of their wages and gains to the expense of governing it, did seem the finest instance of the inverted pyramid, in politics and sense, that had ever been heard of in the world. And the mortification was aggravated by recollection of those magnificent ideas which, for centuries, the people of this part of the world have been taught to associate with India. Old travellers had given us the most delectable romances about palaces and temples as large as towns, pearl-bedecked monarchs and golden gods, elephants carrying marquees of princes and princesses, armies counted by the myriad, rivers with yellow sands, and gales fragrant with spices. And the poets and orators, when any thing surpassingly grand and sumptuous was to be figured to the imagination, have always had recourse to this magnificent region ;—"richer than the Indies" being the most approved common-place of proud comparison, and the last towering superlative being an allusion to the "mines of Golconda." Now, when it has been found, that very considerable territorial acquisitions in this most gorgeous portion of the mundane system, brought us not a pennyworth of ascertainable advantage ; that each announcement of still ampler acquisitions has been virtually an edict for the imposition of new taxes in England ; that the ultimate enlargement of the Indian state into imperial bulk, has but created a more devouring monster than any that gorges whole cities and camps in the mythology of that country ; and that, nevertheless, all this while, the most lofty strain of exultation and prediction has been invariably sung by a class of interested persons under whose auspices all these matters have been conducted—it is no wonder if modern India is become, to this nation, the most nauseous of all historical subjects.

The mortification thus attending a possession which, under the mock superficial show of every thing splendid and prosperous, is making itself felt as a deadly griev-

ance, receives no alleviation from the nation's *moral* self-complacency. Nobody has ever been struck with the parallel between our wars in Hindostan and the wars of the Maccabees. It was beyond any one's gravity, to vapour about "altars and firesides," in explanation of our reasons for quarrelling and fighting with Subahs and Sultans, several thousand miles on the other side of the Cape of Good Hope. And even after making an allowance, very far beyond the laws of Christian morality, for what would be called "generous ambition," "honourable aggrandizement," and so forth; and after disclaiming, as relative to the eastern sovereigns, the doctrine of divine right, in a much greater degree than it has recently been the fashion to do respecting the old occupants of western *musnuds*; still the national conscience, (if we may be allowed such a phrase) has not been so exactly on a bed of roses as to enjoy with unmingled delight the serenade of victory. The nation has indeed at no time clearly understood, or cared to understand, the principles of Anglo-Indian policy; but it had one constant persuasion of their being such as no man could venture to defend in a practical exemplification, on a reduced scale, in the transactions immediately within our cognizance and experience. And besides the exceptionable quality of the general system, there have been, during the course of our triumphs and acquisitions, a vast number of reports, more or less distinct, of flagrant acts of rapacity and cruelty committed, and with impunity, by individuals; and yet so effectually kept back from full exposure, so dubiously given to view through alternate gleams and shadows, as to excite a suspicion that, in a region where there are the means of so perplexing and darkening evidence,—there may be a sufficient darkness for the workers of iniquity to hide themselves,—there may be, consequently, a mass of unknown iniquity perpetrated. And this suspicion will rest, permanently, on some of the earlier periods of our progress in India, whatever may be our conviction of the amended morality, or more effectual responsibility of our later agents in that country. The amendment, sup-

posing it ever so great, has not yet prevailed long enough, nor made its effects sufficiently notorious, to modify materially the collective character of our Indian history, which is not looked back upon, by the more conscientious part of the nation, without some invincible sentiment much of the nature of shame.

These observations may, perhaps, explain one or two of the causes of the indifference, or rather repugnance, among the generality of reading English people, to any researches into our Asiatic history. It is almost needless to notice that, during the last twenty years, certain phenomena have been presented nearer home, which have reduced to comparative insignificance the events in all remote parts of the world. At Dover we can see, at the distance of twenty miles, the edge of a continent which is the scene of transactions both far more wonderful, and incomparable more important to us, than all that has taken place in Asia for a thousand years—incomparably more important, than if all the thrones between the longitude of Astrachan and Japan were to be overturned in one summer.

In addition to all these matters of high consideration, there are certain small circumstances that have their effect on literary, or call it vulgar, taste, in spite of the consciousness of its being something very like folly to admit such an effect. Such a circumstance is the Indian nomenclature, which, we believe, gives sad offence to the generality of English eyes and ears. It is inconvenient enough, that there are a great number of terms of constant recurrence, of which no social party of half a dozen will ever take trouble to recollect the meaning :—and even if they were anxious enough about it to keep, each, a glossary constantly pinned on the sleeve, there would, we fear, be no getting cured of a certain perverse irksome perception of ugliness in the sound of such vocables as Begum, Chowkey, Chubdar, Boupary, Jowkdar, Cuchurry, Hackery, Jemmautdaar, Mutusuddy, Hurkareh, Munshy, Suzauril, Paishcash, Musnud, Hawaily, &c., &c., &c., &c.—By the way, it is not unamusing to observe, as we do now and then, in the dis-

course and the writing of persons who have acquired a little smattering of knowledge respecting the matters and doings of the Mahometans and Pagans of Mogulshire, with what an air of consequence some of these specimens of euphony shall be brought in, perforce, when the mother tongue has words to express quite as much as these gentlemen know about the subject ;—nor is it also (to glance a moment in a very different direction) a little curious to remark, how the poor Greeks were distressed and overpowered by the majestic sounds of the Indian names of such of the counties and towns as they got near enough to hear of, and what labour they had to reduce them to the humble chatter of the Athenian dialect, by a process of transmutation that has rendered it somewhat difficult to identify them.

All this while, we might have been giving a more direct illustration of the uninteresting quality of modern Indian history, by just transcribing half a score of the Sultan Tippoo's letters,—than which, for the most part, it is impossible to conceive any thing more perfectly jejune. They are generally of the length of only a very few lines, dictating, laconically, the royal pleasure or displeasure to his military or civil servants ; with here and there one addressed to persons, who are reluctantly and awkwardly acknowledged to possess power independent of him. In writing to this class of correspondents, he appears with too much arrogance to be respectful, and at the same time, with too little judgment to be dignified. Nothing can be more paltry than the clumsy jumble of ceremony and insolence, with which he renders the formality of an acknowledgment to his imperial superior, Shah Allum, the nominal sovereign of Indostan, the hapless fallen successor of the Timours and Aurengzebcs.

We do not, and need not, entertain a lower opinion of our august letter-writer than Colonel Kirkpatrick himself, who is probably the first man that has used expressions of such entire contempt as those we here transcribe, and which ought not to be transcribed, without a protest

against the application of such rough and contumelious terms to *any* crowned head, in times so inauspicious as the present to the regal dignity.

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The most prominent characteristic displayed in these letters, is a total abdication of all morality. This illustrious personage made not the least scruple, as his editor observes, to avow the most flagitious principles to his generals and ministers, and frequently to found his orders to them on those principles. With perfect coolness he directs them to practise the basest forms of falsehood, treachery, or cruelty; and it is in the point of fertility of villanous expedients, that he comes nearest to redeeming himself from the Colonel's imputation of want of talent. He really shines out a genius on this side.

Zealous Mahometanism is another strong feature. He displays an active unremitting hatred, or, as he himself expresses it, a "zeal boiling over," against all dissentients from the church of the prophet, whether pagan idolators or Nazarenes—but especially the latter, to whom he never alludes without some genuine cordial expression of rancour. He valued himself highly on having formed a corps of proselytes to the faith, some of them made so by tempting promises, and some by threats and actual violence. In his memoirs he relates with great exultation, the origin of this division of his army, which was first formed of the most serviceable portion of sixty thousand Christians whom he had laid a successful plan to seize, all in one hour, men, women, and children, when assembled in their places of worship, in the country about Goa, and of whom the greatest number commuted their religion probably for their lives. His self-applause, however, does not, here or elsewhere, put out his devotion. The previous capture of a town which facilitated the execution of this plan, was "by the divine favour, and through the aid of the asylum of prophecy, [Mahomet] and with the help of the conquering lion of God, [the Caliph Ali]."

Of all his opponents the English were the objects of his extremest hatred ; and in his earnestness to destroy them, he was capable of foregoing, in a considerable degree, his resentments and revenge against the rest. Their total extermination, for effecting which any and all means were accounted right, is proved by these letters to have been the grand object of his life,—an object that stimulated him so fiercely, as to deprive him of much of the caution which he should have observed with respect to the avowal. The Colonel does not assert, that the knowledge of these declarations of his intention had come to the English government, to assist their interpretation of the hostile symptoms which drew the rapid assault, under which both the monarch and his kingdom perished.

The editor, in censuring his hero's parsimonious economy with regard to the appointments and emoluments of his officers, has rather unaccountably declined the opportunity of celebrating the splendid contrast furnished by the rival government ; which, in detestation of such vile thrift, chose to run up a generous and magnificent debt of many millions, to be ultimately laid on the labour of the people of England. We may be allowed to doubt, whether, if the Sultan had possessed the same resource, he would have been so guilty, as we confess he appears to have been, of that meanest and most hateful vice of governors, the being economical in the expenditure of the public money. But even situated as he was, we had the greatest difficulty in restraining our indignation against him, on finding among the very first letters in the series, an order sent to a governor, to have certain public functionaries who were paid by the state, soundly "*flogged*," because—but it will never be believed in this more civilized and moralized country :—we will however assign the reason ;—it was because these gentlemen were making their offices *sinecures*,—not that they were doing the business wrong, but that they wished to do *no* business for their salaries !

If we had not exceeded due limits already, we would

insert a few of the letters ; but we repeat that, for any reader who is not minutely examining the history of the period, they are just nothing ; they will not supply the smallest gratification even to curiosity.—The editor and translator has taken the greatest pains to make the version accurate in the first instance, and then to make the letters intelligible, and to deduce from them many points of historical information. To the historian, therefore, of the Indian affairs of those times, the work will be valuable, and only to him.

[February, 1812.]

Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland: to which are added, Translations from the Gaelic; and Letters connected with those formerly published. By the Author of "Letters from the Mountains."
12mo.

It is a gloomy reflection which occurs to us, in contemplating the world as a very picturesque scene, that much the greatest portion of what man has contributed, and still contributes to make it so, is the result and proof of the perverted condition of the understanding and morality of the species. If we look at the more palpable and material division of the things by which that species have given to the world an aspect very striking to the imagination, it is False Religion that has raised so many superb temples, of which the smallest remaining ruins bear an impressive character of grandeur; that has prompted the creation, from shapeless masses of substance, of so many beautiful or monstrous forms, representing fabulous super-human and divine beings; and that has produced some of the most stupendous works intended as abodes, or monuments, of the dead. It is the evil next in eminence, War, that has caused the earth to be embossed with so many thousands of massy structures in the form of towers and defensive walls—so many remains of ancient camps—so many traces of the labours by which armies overcame the obstacles opposed to them by rivers, rocks, or mountains—and so many triumphal edifices raised to perpetuate the glory of conquerors. It is the oppressive Self-importance of imperial tyrants, and of their inferior commanders of human toils, that has erected those magnificent residences which make a far greater figure in our imagination, than the collective dwellings of the humbler population of a whole continent, and that has in some spots thrown the

surface of the earth into new forms. Had an enlightened understanding and uncorrupt moral principles always and universally reigned among mankind, not one of all these mighty operations, the labours of unnumbered millions, under the impulse and direction of a prodigious aggregate of genius and skill, would even have been thought of. Not one stone would have been laid of Pagan temple or embattled fortress, of mausoleum, or triumphal arch, or tyrant's palace. The ground occupied by the once perfect, and now ruined, mansions of the gods at Athens, or Palmyra, or Thebes, or Rome, the sites of the Egyptian pyramids, of the Roman amphitheatres, and of the palaces of the Alhambra or the Seraglio, might, some of them, have been cultivated as useful pieces of garden-ground, and some of them covered, from early ages till now, with commodious, but not showy, dwellings of virtuous families, or plain buildings for the public exercises of the true religion. In short, the world would have been a scene incomparably more happy and more morally beautiful, but it would have been without a vast multitude of objects that now conspire to make a grand, and even awful, impression on the imagination.

If we fix our attention on the other class of things contributed by the human species, to give what we call a picturesque character to the world—the class supplied by their personal condition and manners—we find that in this part also of that character the most striking appearances are those which manifest error and moral evil. What is it, in this view, that most powerfully seizes the imagination? It is the wild and formidable character and habits of savages and barbarians,—of North-American Indians, South-Sea Islanders, Arabs, and Tartars: It is the monstrous forms of national polity, or of subordinate social institution: It is the contrast of the various systems of manners, rivals perhaps in absurdity: It is whatever is most pompous, most fantastic, or most vicious, in the ceremonial appointments of civilized and uncivilized society: It is that ferocious aspect of hostility with which the human tribes all over the earth

are constantly looking at one another, and those dreadful collisions in which myriads are perishing every month ; but perhaps, above all, it is their superstitions: for these, by their nature, partake more than all the other things enumerated, of that solemnity and mystery which have so mighty a power over the imagination.

We now come towards the purpose of this prolix array of common places, by the double observation,—that the advance of just thinking and right moral principles will, proportionably, annihilate a great deal that is very striking and romantic in the now existing economy of the human species,—but that we ought to be pleased for these picturesque aspects to vanish, if their disappearance be owing to the removal of that intellectual or moral perversion by which they were produced. The complacent feeling here demanded, as a tribute due to the excellence of truth and moral rectitude, is, of course, only called for at the disappearance of such striking features of the world as belong to the latter division, that is, of such as are presented in the personal condition and habits of the human species, and indicate, so long as they appear, the continued operation of the evil causes from which they have arisen. For as to those material objects produced by the prevalence of evil, and which are so fascinating to the imagination,—the pyramids, the ruined temples, and the vast works that remain as monuments of former wars, we suppose almost all men may agree in wishing they might continue to exist to the latest periods of the world, to assist historians in representing, and a distant posterity in a happier age in believing, the true state of mankind in former periods. But the picturesque forms of practical superstition, and of any other thing in the human economy which indicates and results from a still operating perversion of understanding or moral sentiments, ought not to be deplored when they vanish to return no more,—even though they were as captivating to the fancy, as comparatively innoxious, and combined with as many virtues, half virtues, and romantic fine qualities, as the superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland.

Our old friend Mrs. Grant is some trifle below our standard, on this subject. She acknowledges, with full conviction, that that mode of personal character, (comprising notions, moral sentiments, and practical habits,) and that constitution of the social economy, which should be formed on the plain ground of absolute truth generally, and specially on the ground of religious truth, perfectly clear of every deceptive fancy, would be better than the very best state of the ancient Highland character and social system. And yet there is something so singular, so poetical, and really in some points so truly elevated, in the ancient character and economy of these Celtic tribes, that she shows a kind of reluctance to lose any particle that entered into the constitution of so strange and interesting a moral order. She cannot help looking back with a feeling, perhaps, in some slight degree, tinged with fondness and regret, on some of the more romantic and harmless of the superstitions that once had so visionary and solemn an influence. She has somewhat of a similar feeling, in this retrospect, to that with which a solitary devotee to contemplation has sometimes beheld the beautiful delusive aspects of things by moonlight fading into the plain sober forms of reality under the commencing ascendancy of day-light, or with which a person awaking from an enchanting dream, strives to recall the vanishing images, the last glimpse of which seems to convey something much finer than the objects arranged round the room, or to be seen through the window. And we must confess we were scarcely ever in an equal degree disposed to be forbearing to such a feeling. The departed or departing system of sentiments and habits certainly did contain a great deal that very powerfully tended to fix indelibly a fondly partial impression of almost *all* its parts on a youthful mind of sensibility and poetical enthusiasm, when presented to its view amidst that solemn mountain scenery, where that system had prevailed so many ages, had left so many religiously admitted traditions, and had continued, even down to that time, to maintain a very considerable, though declining, degree of actual prevalence among the people.

Setting aside historical correctness, we can well believe

that our author is better qualified than any other person to delineate a lively picture of the former economy of Highland society. She complains, however, that it is now somewhat too late.

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It certainly is to be regretted that there had not been, a century since, or even at a somewhat later period, just such an observer as our author (saving, perhaps, that a somewhat smaller portion of enthusiasm would have sufficed for the object) introduced among the Highland tribes, and domesticated for several years among different clans, in order to enter into the very recesses of their character and social state, to learn their traditionary histories, to preserve the most striking of their written and unwritten poetry, to collect characteristic anecdotes, to discern the most material differences in the general character as appearing among the different sections of the people, and then to come away with a comprehensive description of what certainly had no parallel among nations, and of what, being now in a great measure broken up and annihilated, will never return into existence. And that description ought to have been given with the same ease and animation as this before us,—the same power of presenting such moral portraits as will serve as well as if we conversed with the real living beings,—the same general and versatile force of colouring,—much of the same friendly sympathy with the people,—and as little as possible of the same neglect of method.

But our author shows it would, at any time, have been very difficult to acquire any intimate knowledge of the character of the Highlanders. Between them and the Lowlanders there uniformly existed such an active antipathy as to preclude all unreserved intercourse.

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The distance of half the circumference of the globe could hardly have been more effectual than such a state of neighbourhood, to keep the best and the most romantic qualities of the mountaineers unknown. And any friendly and inquisitive stranger who should have wished to

reside among them, would have met, according to Mrs. Grant's very natural representation, almost insuperable obstacles. As a transient visitor he would have been received with politeness and hospitality ; but if attempting to establish himself he would have been regarded as an intruder ; and especially any attempt to obtain the smallest particle of land, even if it could have been successful, would have excited so strong an hostility, as to leave no security either to his property or person. The land was not more in any of the districts than to afford moderate allotments to the members of the clan, all of whom regarded themselves as the family of the chief, and as having therefore such claims on him that his granting one acre to a stranger would have been a piece of outrageous injustice.

Nor was any satisfactory information to be obtained concerning the interior character of this race, from such individuals of them as sometimes came among the more southern people of the island. For either they came for education, too early in life to bring with them either the mature example or the knowledge of that character ; or, if they came at a more advanced age, their quick and proud perception of the liability of their most peculiar feelings and superstitions to ridicule among a less romantic generation, has put them on the most cautious reserve. Some of them have even endeavoured to extirpate from their minds the order of sentiments so incommodious, because reputed so irrational, amidst such uncongenial society ; but our author affirms that, once fixed, these sentiments became so deep and tenacious, that even though the force of the clearest religious truth were also brought in aid of the expulsion, and might seem to have effected it, they would recover almost all their power if a man happened to return to his native region.

“The moment he felt himself within the stony girdle of the Gram-pians, though he did not yield himself a prey to implicit belief, and its bewildering terrors and fantastic inspirations, still he resigned himself willingly to the sway of that potent charm, that mournful, yet pleasing illusion, which the combined influence of a powerful imagination and singularly warm affections have created and preserved in those romantic regions : That fourfold band, wrought by music, poetry, tenderness, and melancholy, which connects the past with the present, and the material

with the immaterial world, by a mystic and invisible tie ; which all born within its influence feel, yet none who are free from subjection to the potent spell can comprehend. This partial subjection to the early habits of resignation to the wildering powers of song and superstition, is a weakness to which no educated and polished Highlander will ever plead guilty. It is a secret sin, and, in general, he dies without confession ; for this good reason, that he could not have the least hope of absolution."—Vol. i. p. 36.

Ten essays make the substance of these volumes ; and our first intention was to attempt a slight abstract of them in succession ; but their excessively desultory and immethodical form has obliged us to decline this attempt. In a large work there really would have been no forgiving so irregular a mode of managing a subject. In the present instance the space is not so wide, but that the reader may traverse again any part of it where he imperfectly recollects the curious things that were scattered in such plenty and confusion. Taken all together, these essays form probably the most just and comprehensive, and beyond all question, the most animated description of Highland sentiments, manners, and customs, that has ever appeared. And the work abounds with what is of superior merit and ability to mere picturesque description ;—with acute guesses at causes and happy illustrations of principles,—and also with pensive and elevated sentiments, sympathetic with those which formed the solemn and peculiar grace of the mystical and poetical people of whom the work is a worthy memorial.

A variety of sensible observations are made concerning the influences that operated, in a remote age and progressively downwards, to promote the growth of so peculiar, and in many points so dignified and attractive a character. Much is justly ascribed to the unmingled quality of the race, and consequent completeness of fraternity from identity of origin, with which they took possession of their mountains and glens, as a long asylum from the encroaching power of the southerns : to the still more concentrated recognition and spirit of kindred, the almost family economy and charities, into which the divisions respectively were compressed in their several vallies : to the spirit of independence which formed them

all to heroism, through each successive generation, in defending their mountain territory : to their pride in a long unbroken line of honourable ancestry, to which they were most solicitous and ambitious to be honourably added, in the retrospect of their own distant posterity ; and to the gloomy and sublime character of the region they inhabited. Music and heroic songs contributed at once to augment and to combine the influences of all these causes.

These particulars, as illustrated in a very spirited manner by the essayist, will go far towards accounting for the moral phenomena of the Highlands ; but will still, we think, leave a considerable degree of mystery resting on the origin of some of the distinctions of the character in question. Much of a similar process has taken place with respect to other tribes of mankind without producing the same result. How, especially, is to be explained that refined and reflective pensiveness so prevalent among these tribes ?—if we are to admit the fidelity of our author's representation, and if there be any thing genuine, in point of moral spirit, in the poetry attributed to Ossian. It is easy enough to comprehend that habits of warlike passion, enterprise, and hazard,—that the frequent employment of chasing and killing the wild animals of the mountains,—that the gloomy impressions of a bold and gigantic but most dreary scenery,—and the combination with all these of the memory or traditions of brave ancestors, and of dark fancies about the haunting of their ghosts, might well have produced a certain fierce and austere solemnity, such as that which throws a frowning shade over the character of the heroes of Odin, as represented in what has come to us of the northern poetry, or such as that which has been found among some of the American aborigines. But really it is not yet explained how this division of the Celtic barbarians acquired the tender melancholy, the pensive sublimity, the affectionate enthusiasm which, as far as yet appears, we must be constrained to attribute to them in such a degree as to no other uncultivated race.

The Essayist has made a strong and pleasing representation of the general good sense, thoughtfulness, and habits of shrewd and vigilant observation, of the Highlanders; and has shown that their local circumstances and their social condition very strongly called forth their thinking faculties. The comparatively little, though to them most important affairs of their valley and their clan, may indeed appear to furnish but a narrow scope for the exercise of those faculties, and of that conversational and deliberative oratory in which also they are here pronounced to have excelled: but our author has shown that this confined sphere did, notwithstanding, include a very considerable diversity of such occasions as demanded, each, a specific judgment and plan of action. She has represented, too, that while these tribes were secluded in complete ignorance of all the knowledge and literature of the world, it is wonderful how much truth of a moral and practical kind had been struck out among them by the coöperation and collision of their own minds, and fixed as a permanent common stock by the most faithful traditionary preservation.

Our author has enlarged also, with great animation, on the social virtues of these tribes,—the well governed temper and passions, the promptitude to friendly mutual services, (within the boundary of the clan) the matrimonial fidelity, and that lofty sense of honour entertained by even the meanest members of the community. And she has shown how much these qualities were promoted by their high notions of a dignified ancestry, from whose revered character it would be infamous to degenerate, and by the consciousness of being, every individual of them, at all times within the cognizance, for honour or for shame, of the whole clan.

* * * * *

The superstitions of the Highlanders related chiefly to apparitions of the dead, and to fairies, of good, bad, and equivocal character. These simple elements spread, of course, into a very wide diversity of particular forms, which our author has represented a good deal at large in

very lively colours, with a variety of curious illustrative anecdotes, many of which fell within her own knowledge.

In looking toward the probable origin of the belief in apparitions of the dead, she insists, in opposition to the scornful disbelievers in all such phenomena, (which, however, she herself appears to consider as being uniformly fallacies of imagination) that the belief of such mysterious visitations could not have originated with minds of the weaker order; and she illustrates, in a very forcible and poetical manner, how such a belief was likely to originate, and probably did originate in very thoughtful minds of powerful imagination and deep sensibility. Perhaps, if the plain truth could be known, it would appear to be, that the persuasion did not originate in the mere constitution of minds of any class; but in certain real preternatural phenomena in the earliest ages, combining and conveying down their effect along with that belief in the existence after death, which tradition has dimly preserved in almost all barbarous nations. We will, however, transcribe a few of the sentences in which she conveys her conjectures.

"During the dim dawn of intelligence, no reason appeared why the spirit, still supposed to exist in a separate state, should not still cherish the pure affections and generous sentiments which made it lovely and beloved while imprisoned in mortality. To such enthusiastic beings as we have been contemplating, it could not appear unlikely that spirits so attached and so lamented, should assume some semblance of their wonted form and countenance; that they should come in the hour of deep sorrow and silent recollection, to soothe the solitary mourner, to assist his fond retrospections, and to cheer him with the hopes of a future meeting in some state no longer incident to change or separation. The state of mind thus pre-supposed, was quite sufficient to give familiar voices to the winds of night, and well-known forms to the mists of the morning. Thus it is likely that the first apparitions were the offspring of genius and sensibility, nursed by grief and solitude. These phantoms, however, which exalted the musings of the superior order of souls, and lent them wings to hover over the obscure abyss of futurity, were not long confined to their visionary solitudes. They soon became topics of vulgar discussion, and popular belief; the fancied forms which were now supposed to people solitude, added horror to obscurity, and doubtless gave new terrors to guilt."—Vol. i. p. 95.

A belief in the conscious existence of men after death

being pre-supposed, this and similar passages would be as plausible, as they are a poetical explanation, of the manner in which the belief in apparitions might originate among a people of the character, and in the stage of early intellectual progress, which the Essayist describes. Indeed, with the pre-supposition, it is highly probable that in such a state of mind and society the belief really *would* originate, and in this manner, if it had not existed already in a still more primitive period of the world. But such a belief could not have failed to become established in that more primitive age in consequence of the notorious occasional intervention and appearance of spiritual agents, which we have cause to be assured was no very infrequent expedient in the divine government, in the periods antecedent to the existence of a written revelation. If even but a very few instances of such preternatural intervention took place, in the parent nation of mankind, the possibility of spectral manifestations would be one of the most fixed notions among all the branches into which that nation extended and divided; a notion that probably could never be so far obliterated as that its existence among the Celtæ, or any other people, may rationally be attributed to the inventive conception of minds in a state of pensive enthusiasm. The general belief of a future state would powerfully contribute to preserve this notion uninterruptedly in existence. We repeat, however, that this high probability of the primeval origin of the notion in question, does not forbid us to admit, in such an enthusiastic state of mind as the author describes, a *competent* creative energy to originate the idea and the belief, in minds previously entertaining a persuasion of a conscious existence after death. Some of our author's expressions seem to imply, that even this latter belief also might have sprung up spontaneously amidst the solemn enthusiastic emotions of heathen and barbarous minds. But neither was this great truth originally left by the Creator to the chance of being or not being inventively apprehended by the human mind, nor can we admit that without revealed intimations it ever would have been

so conceived as to become a prevailing belief among mankind.

The ancient occupiers of the Highlands having doubtless brought with them the belief of separate spirits both existing and appearing, it is easy to comprehend that in such a country, and such a state of the social feelings, the instances of this supposed appearance would become frequent, and would be with an aspect and circumstances of a deeply melancholy character. When the scene of their training to the belief and expectation of apparitions was a wild and solemn region,—with vast mountain solitudes, lofty or fantastic summits, deep darkened glets, torrents and cataracts, rocks, precipices, caverns and echoes, mists, meteors, and storms; and when some of the occupations of some of the seasons, involved considerable peril; and when, besides, each gloomy or dangerous locality by degrees acquired its tradition of being the scene of some mysterious occurrence; the effect could hardly fail to be, that their minds would be kept in that imaginative state, in which, while undefended by knowledge, they would be subject to endless illusions, and chiefly of a gloomy kind. And then, as our author so repeatedly represents, the state of the community and the social affections,—the cherished memory of a common and revered ancestry,—and that secluded, compressed, and reciprocally dependent condition of each tribe, which produced a more warm and faithful sentiment of fraternity even than that so often observed in uncultivated small nations, and which followed with enthusiastic and inextinguishable tenderness each departed relative and associate,—would powerfully contribute to retain, in Highland apprehension, the spirits of the departed friends as a shadowy but sometimes visible adjunct to the living community. And their conversations and their poetry would turn very often on this solemn subject, and on the supposed particular instances which had given almost every man, in his own apprehension, a kind of practical knowledge and interest in it. Nevertheless, it is asserted by some who have paid attention to such remains as have been preserved of the genuine poetry of the ancient

Highlanders, that they contain nothing like that excessive frequency of ghosts, which has made their appearance quite a vulgar and unimpressive phenomenon in the poetic fabrication of Macpherson.

As examples of the mode and affecting circumstances of these supernatural interventions, the essayist has introduced two striking poetical stories, one from the Death of Gaul, "a poem," she says, "of *undoubted* antiquity."* But after all that has been written, and all poetical relics that have been produced, it still appears impossible to form any distinct idea of the mode of subsistence, and the degree and kind of knowledge, power, or happiness, attributed by these Celtic tribes to separate spirits. No comprehensive and systematic economy of their condition seems to have been matured by their poets. The rude conception of their existence seems to keep them in being, rather that they may not be lost to the survivors, and that there may be society for those survivors to go to when they also shall depart, than to regard them as existing for their own sake, in an independent and a dignified economy. Nor could it seem that they were regarded as in possession of any very animated kind of happiness; which is rather strange, when we consider the ardent affection with which departed friends were remembered, and the lively interest with which the survivors are represented as anticipating their own removal into the disembodied society. This deficiency of attraction in the *state* of the separate spirits strikes us so forcibly, that, though it will be allowed that such a people might feel much interest in the thought of rejoining their dead friends in *any* state not positively unhappy, yet we may very reasonably doubt whether the complacency in the view of death could be so much a thing of course as is implied in the following passage,—if the representation is to be understood of a time antecedent to the introduction of Christianity:

* This is rather indiscreet, as Mr. Laing has pronounced it to be of recent workmanship: we do not know whether his challenge to the editor to produce any good evidence that it was not written by himself, has been accepted or not.

"This army of ghosts, that constantly hovered round those that mourned for them, and kept alive both their affection and their enthusiasm, had a two-fold effect upon the general character of the people. It was favourable to courage, as death, which did not put an end to existence, and re-united them to their departed friends, could have nothing very terrible in it; and it strengthened attachment, because the deceased were not only ever present to the memory, but supposed to be often obvious to the senses. The beloved object, who not only dwelt in the soul of the mourner, but seemed ever hovering round, with fond impatience, to watch the moment of the union, became, if possible, more endeared than ever."—Vol. i. p. 113.

It was, however, very necessary that these pensive and visionary mountaineers *should* be in some good measure habitually willing to quit the society of the living for that of the dead; as, else, their living so close on the frontier of the world of spirits, and with so slight a barrier between, must have been felt a very oppressive privilege;—for it should seem that the imagined appearances and voices of their departed friends most generally communicated warnings of approaching death. And it is to be observed, that these communications from departed spirits have, in the representation, a very mournful character, on the part of both the beings by whom, and the persons to whom, they are made. The forms imagined to be seen are not only of shadowy and ominous aspect, but also have an expression of desolateness, languor, and melancholy: the voices, though soft and sweet, have a tone, and convey expressions, strongly allied to pensive sorrow: and emotions partaking, in full sympathy, of this mournful quality, are generally represented as excited in those to whom the solemn communication is made. In short, if the quality and effect of these supernatural visitings are at all correctly represented to us,—we do not say by the poems given us under the name of Ossian, so very large a portion of which may confidently be ascribed to Macpherson,—but by Mrs. Grant and two or three contemporary admirers and interpreters of the Celtic muse; it is impossible to avoid the conviction, that there was not a predominance of happy feeling in the sentiments which the ancient Highlanders entertained, concerning their relation with the world of spirits. In this respect their mythology, so

to call it, while of so much more pathetic a cast than what we chiefly know of the Scandinavian, appears greatly inferior for animating excitement. The Hall of Odin, with its lively and heroic company, and its revels, presented much more palpable and inspiring forms of delight, of however rude a quality, than any thing we are told of among the feeble and pensive shades on the misty hills of the Highlands.

But it was not, as we have already mentioned, by departed and friendly spirits alone that the people of these tribes were continually haunted. There were fairies of sundry classes, defined or undefined: there were even malignant goblins, exceedingly watchful, and very considerably powerful, to do mischief. An ample portion of the work is employed in describing the kinds of injury they were most inclined or permitted to inflict, illustrated with a number of curious examples, selected from the ample stores that enrich the traditions of every glen and tribe. The longest and most curious story, that of a man who by regular appointment which he was most conscientious to keep, met and fought a number of times, an evil spirit, at midnight, in the most gloomy place in the whole country, is as good as any section we remember in the romances of mystery and terror. Our author must be sensible she has left it quite unexplained, and that some odd particulars of acknowledged fact in it really called for explanation.—She recounts many of the ceremonies of precaution without which, even in modern times, after the prevalence of Christianity among them, (though indeed in an extremely imperfect form) for so many ages, the Highlanders did not deem themselves or their friends secured against the power and spite of the supernatural agents of evil. We may transcribe as a specimen, the account of the ritual for defending an infant and its mother.

“The first danger to be guarded against was the power of fairies, in taking away the infant or its mother; who were never considered as entirely safe till the one was baptized, and the other had performed her devotions at some chapel or consecrated place. All the powers of darkness, and even those equivocal sprites, who did good or evil as they

happened to be inclined, were supposed to yield instantly before the power of a religious rite, or even a solemn invocation of the Deity.

"But, then, the danger was, that one might be carried off in sleep. Sound orthodoxy would object to this,—that the same power guards us waking and asleep. This argument would not in the least stagger a Highland devotee. He would tell you, that till these sacred rites, which admit the child, and readmit the mother, into the church, were performed, both were in a state of impurity, which subjected them (the body, not the soul) to the power of evil spirits; and that it was the duty of the friends of such to watch them during their sleep, that, on the approach of evil spirits (who never came unseen) they might adjure them, in the holiest name, to depart: which they never failed to do when thus repelled. If these vigilant duties were neglected, the soul of the abstracted person might be saved, but his friends, in the privation they sustained, suffered the due punishment of their negligence of what was at once a duty of affection and religion. If, however, they were not able or willing to watch, or wished for a still greater security, the bed, containing the mother and the infant, was drawn out on the floor; the attendant took a Bible, and went thrice round it, waving all the time the open leaves, and adjuring all the enemies of mankind, by the power and virtue contained in that book, to fly instantly into the Red Sea, &c.—After this ceremony had been gone through, all slept quiet and safely: yet it was not accounted a proof of diligent attachment to have recourse to this mode of securing a night's rest to the watcher.

"When the infant was secured by the performance of this hallowed rite from all risk of being carried away, or exchanged for a fairy, there was still an impending danger, which it required the utmost vigilance of mistaken piety to avert. This was not only the well known dread of an *evil eye*, which, by a strange coincidence, is to be traced, not only in every country, in the first stages of civilization, but in every age of which any memorials are preserved: there was, besides this, an indistinct notion, that it was impious and too self-dependent to boast of the health or beauty of any creature, rational or irrational, that seemed to belong to us." [The evil which would be incurred by boasting of the health or beauty of a child was] "no less than that of leaving the defenceless babe at the mercy of evil eyes and evil spirits, to be instantly deprived of the vigour, or the bloom and symmetry so admired. An infant, in short, was not to be praised at all, without a previous invocation of the Deity."—Vol. i. p. 165.

Our essayist represents, that a large portion of the superstitions entertained by these tribes when pagans, became incorporated with Christianity on its introduction, and under this union and sanction continued to prevail to a very late period, indeed to the present day in some of the most retired parts of the Highlands. She observes, that their solemn notions and habitual impressions concerning separate spirits, were adapted to

facilitate the admission of some grand doctrines of Christianity, coalescing with them rather than being supplanted by them ; so that, in fact, the faith of the early Christians in the Highlands respecting a future state, consisted substantially of pagan elements, methodized, exalted, and enlarged by that very limited share which their teachers could impart to them of the light of revelation.—When popery at length made its way, though imperfectly, among them, it introduced into their Christianity more, if not worse, superstitions than Christianity had expelled from their primitive paganism.

A somewhat disproportionate degree of anxiety and labour appears to have been felt and exercised on a topic to which our author returns again and again, namely, the great moral benefits derived by these tribes, both in their heathen condition, and amidst the very feeble and slowly progressive light of revealed truth through subsequent ages, from their superstitious notions respecting spirits. She represents in how many ways it may be hoped these delusions were salutary,—how they raised barbarians above the grossness incident to their condition,—how they afterwards did substantially some things which pure Christianity was not yet grown strong enough among them to do, and how they supplied the deficiencies of an extremely imperfect and unauthoritative legislation. We do not see that the reasonings on this point amount to much more than this very plain and undeniable proposition,—that as far as the superstition concerning ghosts gave additional power to conscience, in enforcing such just moral principles as the people had the knowledge of, so far, and relatively to the matter of fact merely, it was useful. It was clearly thus practically useful when, to take one of our author's illustrations, a man was deterred from committing a murder by the fear of the haunting and vengeance of the ghost, or from being a dishonest or cruel guardian to the children of persons deceased, by the apprehension of an affrighting visit from the spirits of the parents. Just in the matter of fact the operation of the superstition was obviously good : but was it good—must it not have been in many

ways pernicious,—for the mind to be under the persuasion that the ghosts of men were the governors of the world, and the sovereign dispensers of retribution? But more than this; our author herself is candid enough to observe, that some of the operations of the superstition, in at least the pagan period, were extremely pernicious in the simple matter of fact.

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It is also evident from our author's statements, that, besides imposing the fetters and incumbrance of many frivolous and irrational ceremonies, the superstition of the Highlanders has, in spite of the beneficent light of Christianity, given a deformed and gloomy aspect to the providential government of the world, as beheld by them. Of this there needs no other proof than the fact, as stated by her, that they had, in rather recent times, such a fearful unremitting impression of the vigilant haunting of evil spirits, that it was presumption for a person to go out alone in the night.

On the whole, while admiring, perhaps nearly as much as our animated author, the many fine romantic features in this most singular economy, we sincerely rejoice that a system of notions and habits which involved so much unhappy superstition, with such a peculiar power (from the constitution and local situation of the community) of permanently retaining it, is breaking up and passing away. On the cause of this great change, a cause little enough to be sure, directly related to Christianity or intellectual philosophy, our author has many very sensible and interesting observations toward the conclusion of these essays. We need not say the cause is, the adoption, by the great Highland proprietors, of a new, and to themselves more profitable, use of the land. The system which supported and kept together each clan, as a little tribe united by the affections and interests, and indeed by the actual relationships of a large family—that of numerous small allotments of land, partly cultivated for grain—has been generally relinquished, by what would formerly have been called the chieftains of clans. Much of their ancient feudal consequence and authority,

and some portion perhaps of the affectionate and romantic devotedness of their dependent clans, had been already lost, through the effectual interference of government to open and subjugate the Highlands, after the events of 1745. And by degrees the chiefs have come almost unanimously into the plan of living in style in the great cities, like other people of consequence, and drawing the greatest possible revenue from their mountain tracts; and this greatest revenue is found to be realized by giving up the whole to pasturage, especially of sheep. Consequently, a large portion of the inhabitants have been compelled to emigrate, to seek subsistence in the Lowlands or in America. The latter is naturally chosen by all who can afford the expense of the passage; and great numbers have already become diligent cultivators in the United States, or within the limits of the English Canadian territory. There, however, our author asserts, they will not preserve their high enthusiastic and romantic sentiments; but there, then, we presume they will, fortunately, forget by degrees their superstitions. Benevolence would wish that they might there also speedily let their language fall into disuse; for how are they ever to obtain their desirable share of knowledge, while strangers to all the languages in which knowledge has been accumulated and circulated in the civilized world?

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[February, 1812.]

The Lives of John Selden, Esq., and Archbishop Usher ; with Notices of the Principal English Men of Letters with whom they were connected.
By JOHN AIKIN, M.D. 8vo.

As mental exertion is the kind of toil regarded with the most dread and aversion by mankind, while it is, nevertheless, indispensable to their welfare that a proportion of men be induced to undergo it; and as, also, there is among the generality of even tolerably cultivated persons, a very low estimate of both what may and what should be effected in this department; there cannot be a too frequent exhibition of the most memorable examples of successful mental industry. The vexation with which we should confidently hope that, in some hundreds of instances, a book like this will be read, (and really we are afraid, as to those who can read such a book *without* vexation, that, to the greater number of them, it will not be of much use to read at all, either this or other books,)—this vexation will be a proof of the utility of such works. The quiescence and self-complacency of lazy spirits, yet pretending perhaps to somewhat of faculty and of attainment, have some little chance of being beneficially disturbed by such an exhibition: while men of some real exertion and acquirement are taught by force, that a great deal is yet to be done to bring them to even the middle point between the perfectly vulgar state of the human mind, with respect to exertion and intellectual wealth, and the state exemplified at the upper extreme of mental cultivation. And therefore, though Selden and Usher had not, by their studies and writings, done one particle of good *directly*, they would have conferred *indirectly* an inesti-

mable benefit on society, by practically furnishing such an admonitory and stimulating illustration, of what can be accomplished within the short space of human life.

It is still better when, from the circumstances of the period and place in which the distinguished persons lived, the record of their lives must necessarily bring again into view, and in some degree into discussion, subjects of very great importance to the present and to all times:—it is so much the better, provided, we mean, that the writer of this record is a person of such extensive information, sound sense, and candour, and such a temperate lover of liberty, and yet zealous enemy to tyranny of all sorts, as the author of this volume. The times of Selden and Usher, and the transactions in which they were, to a considerable extent, actively or passively concerned, should often be brought back to the view of Englishmen, as supplying a grand practical commentary on both the slavish principles at present so prevalent, and those violently extreme ones into which the ardent friends of freedom are always in danger of being carried by the recoil of antipathy.

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The introduction contains an extremely rapid, but clear sketch of the history of English literature, from the reign of Henry the Eighth down to the period when Selden and Usher raised the literary character of the country to the level of the continental nations,—some of which had made a very considerable progress, while England had remained comparatively barbarous.

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We will attempt a very brief abstract of each of these well-written memoirs, which are themselves very compressed, and are very moderate in taking privilege for reflection and dissertation. John Selden was born in Sussex in 1584, received his early education at the free school of Chichester, and was equal to the composition of a Latin distich at the age of ten. This first literary exhibition, however, was not indicative of his vocation, to which nothing could well bear less resemblance than

the making of verses. He early commenced the study of law, at the inns of court: "but the bent of his genius rather inclined him to closet researches into the history and antiquities of the law, than to the practice of it as a pleader. Wood affirms that 'he seldom or never appeared at the bar, but sometimes gave chamber counsel, and was good at conveyancing.' This inclination was doubtless fostered by the friendship which he cultivated with such men as Camden, Spelman, and Cotton, with whom he became connected on setting out in life." While quite a youth he wrote a work on English antiquities; from the preface of which Dr. Aikin quotes a most uncouth and pedantic sentence as a specimen of his Latin style, which, though afterwards much improved, never attained classical simplicity or grace. A tract which he wrote a few years later, on "Single Combat," furnishes a sample of his English style, which we transcribe.

"Reader, I open not a fence-school, nor shall you here learn the skill of an encounter, nor advantageously in the lists to traverse your ground. Historical tradition of use, and succinct description of ceremony, are my ends; both deduced from the ancients, but without proselenick affectation. After some more sentences, interlarded with learning, he concludes, "Best of the supreme aspects bestow their rays on you."—p. 7.

About the age of thirty, "he gave to the public his largest English work, and that which affords the most copious display of his profound research into the history and antiquity of his own and other modern countries; this was his treatise on *Titles of Honour*." Three years later appeared his work *De Diis Syris*, which "placed him at once in the rank of the first scholars of the age, and introduced him to the men of letters throughout Europe." Its "primary purpose was to treat of the false deities mentioned in the Old Testament, but with this he joined an inquiry into the Syrian idolatry in general, and occasional illustrations of the ancient theology of other heathen nations."

By his next work, *the History of Tithes*, published in 1618, "he exposed himself," says Dr. Aikin, "to a

contest 'with the powers that be'—a contest always formidable to those whose only weapons are pen and ink, and whose only alternative becomes apology or patient endurance."

"The clergy, naturally solicitous to render their maintenance as secure as possible, had not been content to rest it upon the sense the laity might entertain of the utility of their profession, and the reasonableness of an adequate remuneration for their services, but had endeavoured to implicate their claims with the sanctity of a religious obligation. They had therefore advanced the doctrine of the *divine right of tithes*, as inherited by the Christian priesthood from the Jewish, and derived to the latter from the patriarchal ages. This doctrine had been maintained by several English divines, and was beginning to be regarded as fundamental to the establishment of a national church."

Though it is presumed that Selden, like the other lawyers of his time, was an enemy to this doctrine, his book was not written with any avowed intention of controverting it; he insisted that he had written and intended purely and exclusively a history; and that, without at all touching the question, or designedly invalidating any evidence, of the *divine* right, he had made an ampler contribution towards a proof of the *legal* right than all other writers. The very rumour, however, of his work excited alarm; and its appearance caused a complaint of the clergy to his Majesty, previously, as it seems, to any trial of the effect of argumentative censure,—the point of precedence being given to the most *efficient* critic and polemic. The author was summoned into the presence, held two learned conferences with his Majesty, and had begun to flatter himself that his explanations and his respectful humble deportment had pacified the royal displeasure, when he received a citation to appear before some members of the High-Commission court, where he was reduced to make and subscribe a humble and "unfeigned protestation" of grief, and deprecation of anger, on account of the publication and tendency of the obnoxious book. There are various circumstances in his life to prove, that he was very considerably below the level, in point of intrepid inflexibility, of many of the distinguished men of his time: but we will quote the biographer's and Hume's

observations, to show how far the defect of honesty and resolution may in this instance be extenuated.

"Before this eminent person is censured for want of firmness on this trying occasion, candour requires us to cast a view on the terrific powers with which the court of High Commission, established by Elizabeth, and then subsisting in all its vigour, was invested. 'The Commissioners,' says Hume, *Eliz. ch. iv.* 'were empowered to visit and reform all errors, heresies, schisms, in a word, to regulate all opinions, as well as to punish all breach of uniformity in the exercise of public worship. They were directed to make inquiry, not only by the legal methods of juries and witnesses, but by all other means and ways that they could devise; that is, by the rack, by torture, by inquisition, by imprisonment. Where they found reason to suspect any person they might administer to him an oath called *ex officio*, by which he was bound to answer all questions. The fines which they levied were discretionary, and often occasioned the total ruin of the offender, contrary to the established laws of the kingdom. The imprisonment to which they condemned any delinquent was limited by no rule but their own pleasure.' To confront a judicature thus armed required no ordinary share of fortitude; and Selden seems to have thought that he did all that the cause of truth could demand by avoiding any direct retraction of his opinion, or any acknowledgment of error in his statement of faith." [After several more exculpatory observations, Dr. Aikin adds] "In all instances in which the arm of power is applied to for taking a controversy out of the proper jurisdiction of argument, and intimidating one of the parties, they who employ such unfair means are primarily chargeable with the deviations from truth and integrity which may be the result."

The book was prohibited: and while all had full liberty to write whatever they pleased against it, and did write with virulence, the author *was forbidden to write in its defence*. He himself affirms that "at an audience of the king, at the time when Montagu was preparing his Confutation of the History of Tithes, his Majesty sternly forbade him to make any reply, using these words: "If you or any of your friends shall write against this confutation, I will throw you into prison:"—"a truly royal way," says the biographer, "of interposing in a literary controversy."

This iniquitous zeal of the monarch in support of that *divine right* which Selden was deemed to have impugned, was exerted partly as a grateful return, and partly as a new incitement to that correspondent zeal with which it was very important to him that the ecclesiastics should abet *another* divine right—that of kings. And certainly

the people were under some little obligation to him for the bold undisguised simplicity of conduct, by which, as in such instances as the one here recited, he was pleased to rid this latter question, as concerning himself, of all complexity arising from any *secondary* grounds of right. Such a mode of governing might tolerably satisfy them that he had, at any rate, no other rightful claim than that same *jus divinum*; and the men who had grown above the superstition of believing in *that* right, could have no questions, but those of prudence, to settle respecting their duty of obedience to a monarch, who would forbid an author to vindicate his book with arguments against its patronized assailants, and forbid a nation to read the history of its own institutions.

It might have been expected, perhaps, that such treatment of a man of talents and distinguished fame, would have impelled him quickly to a decided coalition with those indignant spirits that were now beginning to make some irreverent inroads on the despotism, even through the formidable fence of divine right. But whatever were his opinions or his resentments, he could not help feeling that an enraged monarch was a very fearful object to look at, or to hear; that "the king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion; but his favour as dew upon the grass." This benignant dew was invoked to fall by some servile and hypocritical offerings to the literary and theological vanity of the royal pedant, "humbly presented," says the biographer, "with an address which cannot be read without a very painful sense of the degradation incurred by literature, when brought in collision with power, unless supported by a proper sense of its own dignity." In the whole of this sacrifice made to the will and prejudices of the sovereign, we discern that "indulgence to his safety" which Lord Clarendon mentions as a feature in the character of Selden.—It is, at the same time, to be observed in his favour, that this very censurable conduct (and the subsequent course of his life presents one or two more instances of nearly similar demerit) is not to be ascribed to a worse cause than timidity; for, though not qualified for a hero or a martyr, he was not mercenary;

nor does he exhibit any thing of that "honourable ambition," as it is usually called, that eagerness for station and office, which has so often given a character of littleness to men of talent and literary acquirements in recent times. And even these delinquencies, resulting from his timidity, were partially redeemed by his general fidelity to the cause of freedom, throughout the course of public conduct into which he was drawn by the great political questions in which he was not allowed to remain neutral. —That state of hostility between the parliament and the king, which was leading to such memorable events, had advanced to a rapid and ominous interchange of the respective acts of offence—the remonstrances and royal reprimands, the protestations and dissolutions—when the parliament called for the information, which Selden was qualified beyond any other man to give, concerning the ancient privileges of that body. And,

"He largely discoursed on the subject, before the house, and giving way to his feelings, digressed to the imminent dangers from popery, and the injurious practices of the courtiers in alienating the king's affection from the parliament. He was also the framer or the adviser of the obnoxious protestation," (in which they had re-asserted their claims to liberty of speech and interposition with their advice.) "On these accounts, when the king, after the dissolution of parliament, thought proper to manifest his resentment against the advocates of the popular cause by imprisoning some of the most distinguished among them, Selden was one of those selected for this honour."

In 1623 he was returned to Parliament by the borough of Lancaster; but had full leisure for the prosecution of his studies—the political warfare languishing, through defect of energy on the royal side, during the last two or three years of James. When it resumed its animation with the commencement of the new reign, we find Selden by no means declining the danger, but actively co-operating with the friends of the people against the tyrannical proceedings of the court, as directed by the unprincipled favourite, the Duke of Buckingham. As an appropriate reward and stimulus, in his patriotic course, he was, in 1629 and the following year, accommodated for a very considerable time with apartments, first in the Tower, and afterwards in the Marshalsea

prison.—But we must not regularly attend his progress any further. A few brief notices may suffice for the sequel of the memoir.—His learned studies were indefatigably, and with little interruption, pursued during this imprisonment, and for several years afterwards, and resulted in several works on Jewish laws and history, and in the revisal for publication of the treatise, composed many years before, entitled *Mare Clausum*, which has probably contributed the most to the notoriety of his name. The biographer states at some length the occasion, and the leading principles, of this formal and learned assertion of the right of England to the dominion of the sea.

Selden was a member of the Long Parliament, and took an active and useful part in many important discussions and transactions. He appears to have been regarded somewhat in the light of a valuable piece of national property, like a museum or great public library, resorted to as a matter of course and a matter of right, in all the numerous cases in which assistance was wanted, from any part of the whole compass of legal and historical learning. He appeared in the national council, not so much the representative of the contemporary inhabitants of a particular city, as of all the people of all past ages, concerning whom, and whose institutions, he was deemed to know whatever was to be known, and to be able to furnish whatever, within so vast a retrospect, was of a nature to give light and authority in the decision of the questions arising in a doubtful and hazardous state of the national affairs. He was uniformly found acting with the friends of freedom; but yet evinced such a friendly moderation with respect to the king, such a disinclination to the demolition of the national constitution, and such an unquestionable superiority to any mean views of self-interest, that he was held in great respect by the royal party. He protested equally and zealously against the measures of both parties in their commencing approaches toward war; but when the mutual demands and resentments had rendered it inevitable, he deemed it his duty, as a citizen and a public man, to continue to

take a practical interest in the national concerns—and therefore to take that side on which, whatever errors his judgment charged upon it, he regarded the balance of justice as decidedly preponderating. He judged it enough that he could perceive which of the parties, and that he was absolutely certain that only one of them, afforded any ground of hope for national liberty. But when this cherished hope had declined with the progress, and at last perished with the complete ascendancy of a military tyranny, he withdrew in a great measure from public business, and was consoled by the unabated delight with which he could still pursue his learned studies. To these his pertinacity of application was such that he could not, sometimes, endure interruption even from his learned acquaintance, and it is told “that when Isaac Vossius sometimes was ascending his staircase to pay him a visit, when he was engaged in some deep research, Selden would call out to him from the top that he was not at leisure for conversation.” This indefatigable course was prosecuted, with probably very little remission, till near the end of his life, which took place “on the last day of November, 1654, sixteen days short of the completion of his seventieth year.”—As to the use which such a life of thinking had taught him to make of religion at the close of it, we are informed that,

“Sensible that his end was approaching, he sent for his friends, Primate Usher and Dr. Langbaine, with whom he discoursed concerning the state of his mind. He observed, ‘that he had his study full of books and papers of most subjects in the world; yet at that time he could not recollect any passage wherein he could rest his soul, save out of the Holy Scriptures; wherein the most remarkable passage that lay most upon his spirit, was Titus ii. 11—14.’”—p. 151.

His opinions on controverted doctrinal points appear to have been kept very much to himself; but the biographer very fairly presumes that the spirit of his motto, “Liberty in all things,” was extended to his theological inquiries, and that the legitimate consequence might very probably be some defect of exact conformity to any model of faith, prescribed by national authorities, or taught by the leaders of sects. Some rather licentious

observations in his "Table-Talk," appearing to implicate in some degree as well his moral sentiments as his faith, are considered by Dr. Aikin as only a sort of free and sometimes witty vivacities, to which he would not have given his authority as serious principles. He was not favourably disposed toward the puritans, except as the enemy of the persecuting measures employed against them; and he was, consistently, not less the enemy of that intolerant spirit strongly manifested, on the attainment of power, by some of those who had previously suffered and protested under persecution.—Selden's general faith in Christianity had the approving testimony of Sir Matthew Hale; and, with respect to his character on the whole, the biographer says,

"That he was regarded with extraordinary veneration and esteem by his contemporaries of different parties, we have the fullest evidence; indeed, the man who reckoned among his friends and admirers Whitelock and Clarendon, Usher and Hale, must have possessed no ordinary share of moral, as well as intellectual, excellence."

The memoir concludes with a number of sensible observations on his character and opinions, principally founded on passages taken from the work called his "Table-Talk." Among them is a wild exclamation concerning the abuse of the precept "Search the Scriptures;" the biographer's comment on which excessively exaggerates the difficulty, (especially if we take into view the assistance so easily obtained, of a number of confessedly very able and very honest critics and expositors of different parties,) of obeying this injunction, to any extensively good purpose, without understanding the original languages.

[April, 1812.]

Hindu Infanticide. An Account of the Measures adopted for Suppressing the Practice of the Systematic Murder, by their Parents, of Female Infants ; with incidental Remarks on other Customs peculiar to the Natives of India. Edited with Notes and Illustrations, by EDWARD MOOR, F.R.S. 4to.

SUPERSTITION is one of those agents, at the operations of which we have in a great measure ceased to wonder, as we naturally do after we have come to attribute to any agent an indefinite power. Such a power we have insensibly learnt to recognize as possessed by superstition, while beholding the continually widening display of its effects in all times and countries. Nor does any examination of the essential nature of superstition remove the impression thus received from viewing its effects, by discovering any certain principles of limitation to its power. Our settled conviction, therefore, concerning it is, that there is no possible absurdity or depravity of which it is incapable. We have seen that the destructive sentiment by which it acts is so variously applicable, that it can operate on every part of the whole moral system of this world ; can dissolve all cements, disturb all harmonies, reverse all relations, and in short confound all order: insomuch that there is no crime which it may not sanction and even enjoin,—no notion too futile or too monstrous for it to proclaim as a solemn truth,—and scarcely any portion of dead or living matter which it may not denominate a deity, and actually cause to be adored.

It is not now, therefore, any matter of surprise, when we find, among the results of any recent inquiry into the state of a distant heathen nation, evidence of the existence among them, in former or even the present times, of the practice of human sacrifice ; whether the victims

are the captives taken in war, or unoffending mature individuals of their own people, or some of their own infant offspring. It was nothing strange, even after all we had been told of the gentle virtues of the people of India, to hear that they would sometimes throw their children to the alligators in the Ganges, as a sacrifice to the goddess of that river. For keeping a great national goddess, this would by no means be counted an extravagant expense; and seldom perhaps have the favourite deities of any mythology cost less. A very long extract, inserted in the work before us, from Bryant's Analysis, is enough to show that, wherever the demon crew of gods and goddesses have obtained an establishment, that is, all over the world, they have demanded to be adored in sanctuaries consecrated by the blood of some that have even been their adorers, and that in many places they exacted as victims, by a marked choice, the persons that might be supposed the dearest to the sacrificers; as if they would take hostages for the perpetual and still more prostrate submission of their nations of slaves. It is really most striking to consider the terms of compact consented to with deities of their own creation, or accepted from pandemonium, by a race that would universally renounce, as too hard, the service of the supreme and beneficent Governor of the world. It is worth while to transcribe a few sentences from different parts of Bryant's comprehensive historical view of the subject.

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Such illustrations, from former ages, of the aptitude of the human nature to yield itself in alliance and servitude to a diabolical power, and of the rites performed in recognition and celebration of that league and devotion, have left to the explorers of lands lately or still but imperfectly known, very slender means, either from fact or invention, of trying the strength of our faith. Tell us that there are idols there, and then they may tell us just whatever they please besides, that is odious and hideous. We know perfectly that is an established law of the divine justice that what was harmless metal, or wood, or stone before, can no sooner be shaped and pro-

moted into an object of worship than it becomes, in effect, a dreadful repository of malignant power, an emitter of diffusive and blasting curses, as if it were actually inhabited by a mighty fiend. Mankind will most certainly be made to suffer the effectual agency of hell from that in which they shall choose to recognize the arrogated attributes of heaven. The moral effect of idolatry, indeed, is so infallibly evinced, and is so intensely impious, that the imagination of a good man would with difficulty avoid associating, literally, the presence of an unseen malignant intelligence with the insensible idol; inso-much that we are persuaded it would have required, in such a man, no ordinary firmness of nerves to have passed, without some oppressive sensations, a day or a night alone in the temple, and the immediate presence of the hideous god of the Mexicans, and would now require it to maintain a perfect composure in such a retired interview even with Juggernaut—an entire security the while from any mischievous human agency being supposed.

Much fewer words, we confess, might have sufficed on this obvious point, that superstition has shown itself of sufficient power for any imaginable atrocity, and that therefore the destruction of Indian children by their parents, has nothing at all of the marvellous in it, when *the gods* are concerned. But the view of this ready obedience to the demands of the gods, would not have prepared us to hear of whole tribes or nations destroying, systematically, almost all their female children, *without* any direct intervention of superstition, and merely as a matter of convenience and custom; and this too without any of that difficulty of procuring subsistence which is, among the savages of North America and New Holland, and also among the Chinese, the cause, and the plea alleged, for the frequent destruction of their offspring. Such however is the infanticide which the present work exposes, with a very unnecessary prolixity, and in a very inartificial method.

This practice was found prevailing among the Rajkumar and other tribes, in and near the province of

Benares, and in the peninsula of Guzerat, and the country of Kutch, forming a considerable portion of territory toward the mouths of the Indus. The first part of the work is a report made in 1789 by the late Mr. Duncan, then resident at Benares, the first person who gave clear information of the existence of the custom. On ascertaining the prevalence of the crime among the Raj-kumars, he lost no time in making representations to them on the subject; and not without hopes of effecting its abolition; since, he says, "all the Raj-kumars with whom I conversed did, while they admitted the fact, fully acknowledge its atrocity; in extenuation of which, they pleaded the great expense of procuring suitable matches for their daughters, if allowed to grow up." The limitation he is careful to state, with respect to the comprehensiveness of the guilt, strongly tends to show its extent.

"It appears, and ought in vindication of humanity to be here noticed, that in *several cases*, natural affection has induced the fathers of Raj-kumar families to rear one more of their female issue; though the instances where more than one daughter has been spared are (as far as I can judge from sundry questions put to these people during my few days' halt among them) but very rare; and I heard only of one general exception of a whole village, the inhabitants of which, who are all of this tribe, had, as my Raj-kumar informant observed, sworn, as he supposed, or at least solemnly pledged themselves to each other, to bring up their females: as a proof of which, he added, that there were now to be seen several Raj-kumar old maids in the village in question; since, from the great expense hitherto usually incurred by this tribe in their marriages, the parents had been unable to dispose of the women in that way."

The tribe were admonished that one of their own sacred books condemns the practice, threatening the destroyer of females with the punishments of one of the hells, during a period of prodigious length. The Brehma, Bywant Purana, with its prohibitions, and its threatenings of "the Naraka, or Hell, called Kat Shutala," had been in the hands of their Brahmins, and its contents properly reported to the other principal persons of the tribe, a sufficient number of centuries, without having the smallest efficacy against the crime. It was the quality of the preacher, rather than the text, that now at

last effected the reformation. The good doctrine was inculcated on their consciences by the agent and representative of a Power, the sound of whose cannon had been heard over India, and whose battalions they knew to have dispersed, wherever they had encountered, the greatest armed crowds of the believers both of the Puranas and of the Koran. Not that they could have any direct apprehension of being subjected to the operation of violence in case of refusing to discontinue the practice; but it is a well-known fact in human nature, that great physical power in the instructor, mightily assists the intellectual faculties of the instructed, even when there are no eminent signs of the coercive or vindictive exertion of that power.

It is not exactly stated in what force this pacific logical emanation of our cast iron and combustible ammunition passed the limit of our own territory, to convey persuasive influence into the minds of that more numerous proportion of the tribe of Raj-kumars that were under the government of the Nawaub Visier of Oude, at that time a sort of independent sovereign; but it could not fail with that division of them that knew themselves to be directly subjects of the English government. At the same time, we really may wonder that the innovation was accomplished so speedily. For it appears to have been at most but very few weeks between Mr. Duncan's first conversing and remonstrating with them on the barbarous practice, and his obtaining the signature of all the principal persons among them to a solemn written covenant, in which, in consideration of the wickedness of the custom, the future punishment threatened in the sacred books, and the displeasure of the British government, they bound themselves to renounce the practice of infanticide, and to expel from their tribe any one who should in future be guilty of it.

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The second chapter contains a much more ample account of this practice as prevailing in Kutch, a maritime tract near the eastern mouths of the Indus, and in Kattywar, which is the country name for the peninsula of

Guzerat. The full evidence of its existence then was first obtained by Mr. Duncan, when at Surat and Bombay, in 1800, and several following years. The first unquestionable testimony from natives was given by a man of consequence in Guzerat; and the fact was confirmed in communications from Captain Seton, who was on a political mission at the principal port of Kutch, and afterwards, with still more ample statements, by Major Walker, the Resident at the court of the Gaikawar, a potentate of considerable, but not very defined, dimensions,* in Guzerat. Captain Seton wrote, in answer to Mr. Duncan's inquiries, that in the family of the Rajah of Kutch, "every female infant born of a Ranni, or lawful wife, was immediately dropped into a hole dug in the earth, and filled with milk, where it was drowned." The law was not extended to those of the Rajah's female children whose mothers were slaves. Captain Seton added, that the whole tribe or cast to which the Rajah belonged also destroyed their daughters, except two persons, who saved each a daughter, through fear of not having "heirs of any sex." He then enumerated other tribes who were in the same practice, but specified one tribe, the Soda Raj-puts, who turned its prevalence among the rest to most excellent account, by rearing their daughters to sell for wives to these other tribes. When these preserved females become mothers, "it might be supposed," says he, "that they would be averse to the destruction of their daughters; but from all accounts it is the reverse, as they not only assist in destroying them, but when the Mussulman prejudices occasionally preserve them, they hold their daughters in the greatest contempt, calling them *majen*, thereby insinuating that their fathers have derogated from their military caste, and become pedlars." This last part of the

* There is, however, a large portion of writing allotted to the explanation of his titles, and the detail of the plots, assassinations, and petty revolutions, that form the history of the dynasty, or rather state, since the time of Aurengzebe. His titles import that he is, among other qualities, "the staunch, magnanimous, brave Prince, like unto Indra, a warrior of prowess in the use of arms."

statement he confirms in a communication made after a progress through Kutch, in 1808. "Such," he says, "is the barbarous inveteracy of these women," (the daughters of the Soda tribe), "that when married to Mahommedans, they continue the same practice, against the inclination and religion of their husbands; destroying their own progeny without remorse, in view of the advantage of the tribe from which they are descended, whose riches are their daughters."

The prevalence of such a practice was thought so monstrous an anomaly, that it seemed so desirable to accumulate, for the assurance of persons remote from the place, evidences of the fact in greater number than would have at all been necessary in any other case; and the testimonies of several natives of Guzerat, of some distinction, are put on record, along with that of Captain Seton.

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The chiefs of Kattywar are tributary to the Gaikawar, the chief personage in Guzerat, with which personage the Honourable Company (the *Kampry Saheb Behadur*, or *Mighty Lord Company*, as Mr. Moor says it is often called in India) is on such terms of alliance as to have a military Resident at his court! Major Walker was the Resident at the time to which this work chiefly relates; and as he was to be at the head of a detachment of English troops, in a grand military progress which was going to be made through the whole peninsula of Guzerat, in the name and behalf of the said Gaikawar and his ally, the Lord Company, in order to settle, once for all, the rate of tribute to be paid by the would-be independent chiefs, he was instructed to combine with the leading purpose a prudent effort to obtain the abolition of infanticide. It was to be prudent, for, as the Supreme Government observes,

"The sepeculative success even of that benevolent project, cannot be considered to justify the prosecution of measures which may expose to hazard the essential interests of the state; although, as a collateral object, the pursuit of it would be worthy of the benevolence and humanity of the British Government."

Major (since Colonel) Walker accomplished the pro-

jected expedition in 1807 ; and from Baroda, in the eastern part of Guzerat, despatched to Mr. Duncan, Governor of Bombay, a long report, dated in March, 1808, of the measures which he had employed for the suppression of infanticide in Kattywar. Instead of a brief summary, Mr. Moor has given the whole of this Report, consisting of a series of paragraphs not connected in a continuous composition, and therefore distinguished by numbers, to the amount of more than three hundred. We think this an idle and unconscionable mode of helping out a book to the requisite bulk for bearing, though not without palpable exorbitance after all, the price set on this volume. It might be highly proper in Colonel Walker to detail and discourse so largely, and pardonable, barely pardonable, to allow himself in such a total and most miserable renunciation of all method, in a private communication to the Authorities to whom he was responsible, and who might have the friendly patience to abstract and dispose in some orderly form in their minds, the information contained within an immense farrago of unconnected shreds of history and observation. This might be excusable ;—though on some ground that we cannot know : as it is certainly impossible to comprehend, why the drawing up of an important document should be exempted from laws, in the neglect of which no composition can make a perspicuous display of its subject. At any rate, however, it is quite inexcusable in Mr. Moor to tax the pocket of the general reader, for the privilege of having also *his* time and patience taxed with the heavy duty of trying to reduce such a confused mass of notices to any thing like a digested scheme of facts and explanations. The reading public (which is nevertheless to be, at the same time, duly cajoled with compliments to its intelligence and candour) is truly held in very light esteem, when authors, editors, and publishers, professing to meet its wishes for information on any particular subject, make no scruple of emptying out the whole crude collection of unwrought materials, from which a completely satisfactory exposition of the subject might have been elaborated, at about one-third of the bulk or price.

This combination of idleness, presumption, and extortion is, in the present times, carried to such a flagrant excess, that even the editor of this volume is to be reckoned among the minor offenders. If the inquisitive public will continue to tolerate such treatment, a large and increasing proportion of authors will entirely forget it ever was a rule in literature that an author should *himself* work out a methodical account of his subject; and will begin to take credit as benefactors to the cause of knowledge for having sold at a most exorbitant rate, and carted out, a blended confused luggage of documents and fragments, from which the purchasers may, if they have time and faculty, make out each one his own notion of the subject.

As for the remainder of our own task in the present case, it will be very fairly disposed of by taking a few notices, here and there, from this very singularly fabricated document of the Resident in Guzerat. The Jarejahs "spoke freely of the custom of putting their daughters to death, and without delicacy or pain, but were more reserved on the mode of their execution. They appeared at first unwilling to be questioned on the subject; and usually replied, "it was an affair of the women;"—"it belonged to the nursery, and made no part of the business of men." They at last, however, threw off this reserve." Several acknowledged methods of committing the crime are enumerated; but especially two,—that of putting opium in the infant's mouth, and that of drawing the umbilical cord over its face to prevent respiration. The use of the before-mentioned expedient of drowning in milk was not confirmed to Colonel Walker. Sometimes the victim is laid down, and left to perish without any application of violence. In short, the mode of perpetration is not subjected to any invariable and indispensable rule.

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With very rare exceptions, the murder is perpetrated immediately after the birth; and "it would be considered," says the Resident, "a cruel and barbarous action to deprive the infant of life after it had been

allowed to live a day or two." Yet he had ground to believe that this still greater atrocity does sometimes take place. The extinction of such a life is regarded by a Jarejah as an event of the utmost possible insignificance. "The occurrence excites neither surprise nor inquiry, and is not made a subject even of conversation."

There is some variance between the testimony just now cited, importing a formal consultation of the father of the infant, and the information obtained in a more familiar intercourse with the Jarejahs. According to this later and more direct information, on which Colonel Walker appears to rest his final statement, the destruction of the child is so mere a matter of course, and so perfectly trifling an affair in the esteem of the father, that it may be perpetrated without being even mentioned to him. Another unimportant difference of representation is, between the precursory information which asserted that the preservation of a female infant would sink the parents into utter disgrace among their tribe, and the later and better evidence that such a singularity would indeed be accounted very foolish, but would not be particularly opprobrious. There is also a slight degree of wavering in the statement, as made at different times and on various evidence, of the number of exceptions to the general custom. But the evidence of all kinds, from all quarters, most perfectly coincides to prove that the instances of females preserved were extremely rare.

It would be quite certain beforehand, that no nation could have a prevailing crime of which the priests of a false religion would not know how to make their advantage. In the present instance the wonder is how the Raj-Gurs* can have been content to make so little.

"The infant, after it is destroyed, is placed naked in a small basket, and carried out and interred. In Kattywar any of the female attendants of the family perform this office; but in Kutch it is done by the domestic Raj-Gur. The Raj-Gurs, who bury the infants that perish, receive a

* The Raj-Gur, otherwise called Raj-Gurn, is literally the priest, tutor, or preceptor of a Rajah; but the term is applied to the domestic Brahman of any family in this country.

fee of one kori, which is a coin equivalent in value to one-third of a rupee, or about tenpence sterling; and a meal. . . . In Kutch the female Raj-Gurs are sometimes the executioners of the infant instead of the mother."

A number of observations relative to the origin of the detestable custom are dispersed here and there in this report. A current tradition among the Jarejahs is, that in some ancient time a "powerful Rajah of their caste," having a daughter of eminent beauty and accomplishments, to whom, after a most anxious search far and near, he could find no man of sufficient rank and merit to be a husband,—while yet it would be a grievous calamity and disgrace for her to remain in celibacy,—consulted, in this distress, his Raj-Gur, who advised him to put her to death. He was long averse to this savage expedient, both on the ground of affection and religion; and he cited those denunciations in the Sastras, or sacred books, which affix enormous guilt to the murder of a woman. The Rajah's repugnance and fear, however, were in the end overcome by a general offer of the priest to "load himself with the guilt, and become in his own person responsible for all the consequences of the sin." Ever since that time the daughters have been destroyed. This legend is of no authority with Colonel Walker; but he says something that seems to imply that this story of the transfer of the guilt has had an effect, even down to the present time, as a salvo, if such a thing were wanted, for any small remainder of conscience that could serve amidst a general and inveterate custom; and that it has had this effect through a notion that the transfer was representative and virtually perpetual,—removing the guilt from the infanticide parents to the Raj-Gurs through all generations downward. He ascribes to the Jarejahs a sufficient degree of credulity to be entirely confident of the efficacy of such an adjustment.

Having dismissed this story, he suggests that the abominable custom may have originated at the time when these Hindoos are recorded to have inhabited the country of Sinde, a tract lying on the Indus, between the country they now inhabit and Persia. The Mahometans, in the

early period of the progress of their religion and empire, conquered this territory, and converted, after their manner, a large proportion of its Raj-put inhabitants. Colonel Walker conjectures that the Jarejahs, resisting this conversion, and at the same time becoming surrounded by tribes who had embraced a new faith, (and so rendered themselves unworthy to obtain, as they had been accustomed, the daughters of the Jarejahs for wives,) determined rather to destroy their female offspring than either, on the one hand, submit to the debasement of such affiances, or on the other, incur the disgrace, and perhaps guilt, of bringing them up to remain unmarried. The Colonel omits to notice, however, that on this plan they must very soon have resolved to quit the country, since they would be as much deprived of all resource for wives for their sons, as for husbands for their daughters. In an appendix to this report, he mentions that at a still more advanced period of his inquiries, he has been told another tradition, to which he is inclined to attribute much probability; namely, that

“Some of the early Mussulman invaders of the Jarejahs’ country, experiencing the determination with which they defended their liberties, united policy to their arms, and sought to consolidate their interests in the country, by demanding the daughters of the Rajahs in marriage. The high-spirited Jarejahs would not brook the disgrace, and pretended they did not preserve their daughters; but fearful of consequences, and apprehensive that force would be resorted to in order to obtain what was refused to entreaty, they in their extremity listened to the advice of their Raj-Gurs; and, deluded by the fictitious responsibility which they accepted, the practice of infanticide originated, and has since been confirmed.”

Whatever was the period or the immediate cause of the commencement of the practice, it had attained such inveteracy and general sanction as to effect, throughout a whole people, a clear positive reversal of that system of moral sentiments, which has often been pronounced by the admirers of human nature to be substantially inseparable from the human mind in its sane state. We say reversal, rather than merely suspension or abolition. For several passages in these multifarious documents assert, and others clearly imply, that the Jarejahs have

somewhat piqued themselves on this custom, as an honourable distinction of their tribe. They felt it as a mode of proclaiming to the neighbouring nations that they were too dignified a race to set any value on so trivial a produce as human females, and yet also that their very daughters would be beings too respectable to be put in subjection to even the best of the superior sex of any other tribe.

The more ordinarily influential motives, however, combined with the powerful influence of general custom, were stated to be, an aversion to the trouble of rearing and disposing of the children, and a mixture of pride that would not affiancé a daughter without giving her such a portion as would show from what an illustrious tribe she came, with the avarice that refuses to charge itself with such an expense. In some few instances this pride may have overborne this avarice, and a daughter has been spared. Affection, or humanity, or a sense of duty, were found by the Colonel not to have been the inducements to the saving of those extremely few females that had been permitted to escape the common fate. He met with only two instances that could be imputed to such principles, and one of them was afforded by "a professed robber." The present work is such a display of human character, that this lawless barbarian appears like a tender enthusiast, fit for the most sentimental province of the country of romance; and there is hardly a more interesting paragraph in the book than that which relates to him.

"Hutaji is a professed robber, with whom sentiment and feeling might be supposed to be strangers. The profession which he followed did not prevent me from conversing with Hutaji, nor [lead me] to avoid a pretty frequent intercourse with him. This man, with the aspect and manners of a barbarian, possessed all the feelings of natural affection, which led him to cherish his daughters, in opposition to the usage and prejudices of his tribe. They are between six and eight years old; and he brought them both to my camp, where they were vaccinated. I observed their father caressing them with pleasure, and exulting in them with true parental satisfaction; and their persons and manners were very interesting. It deserves remark, as exhibiting a strong feature in the character of the Jarejahs, and of their feelings with respect to their daughters, that these girls wore turbans, and were dressed and habited like boys.

As if ashamed or afraid of acknowledging their sex, they assured me they were not girls, and with infantile simplicity appealed to their father to corroborate the assertion."—p. 67.

It should be observed, that the law of destruction takes effect much less generally on the illegitimate female offspring; whose mothers are held by the Jarejahs in a capacity between wives and slaves, and are taken, with little care of selection, from any of the neighbouring tribes, whereas they show the utmost nicety of pride in selecting their wives from the most honourable Raj-put families; "even the poorest and lowest Jarejah feeling the utmost solicitude not to taint his blood by an improper alliance." It is not, as may easily be supposed, from humanity, that these infants of meaner quality are frequently spared, "but rather," says Colonel Walker, "from a contemptuous opinion of their inferiority. These children are not considered to belong to the caste, and their future situation in life is of little consequence, though the pride and prejudices of a Jarejah make him occasionally also destroy his spurious offspring." These daughters are "bestowed on Mussulmans, or on Hindus of an inferior caste; and their settlement is attended with little expense or publicity; the motives, therefore, which lead the Jarejahs to destroy their legitimate daughters do not exist with equal force with respect to those by the rackilas, or mistresses.

We must suppose that the pride of this depraved race has such an ascendancy over all better feelings, as to preclude any affection for these daughters of reputed inferior blood, even when they are growing up, as, else, the fathers, being thus made sensible how interesting their other daughters also would become if spared, could not with such perfect indifference doom them all to perish.

Colonel Walker acknowledges his want of any good data for a calculation of the number of female infants that annually thus perish by violence, though he has made many inquiries, and received several loose estimates on the subject, from persons considerably acquainted with the country. A number between fifteen and twenty

thousand would probably be the mean of these calculations of the yearly destruction in Guzerat and Kutch.

It would be gratifying to abridge the narrative of Colonel Walker's indefatigable and most meritorious exertions for the suppression of this unequalled enormity, if our limits now allowed room for any thing more than an animated congratulation to him and to the very cause of virtue itself,—among the most memorable of whose agents he has taken his rank,—on the complete *success* of those exertions, throughout one wide portion of the country in which they were so judiciously and so resolutely prosecuted. In the remoter part of it—the territory of Kutch—the fear of the English had not yet grown to a sufficient strength to second effectually the force of persuasion: and the Colonel's repeated and earnest appeals to their humanity, and what they call their religion, had thus far failed, though the time is very likely not far distant when they also will begin to feel the illuminations of that *logic* which has so mighty a power over Asiatic understandings—and indeed those of all other nations. But in Guzerat the great object of Colonel Walker's exertions is accomplished. He persevered in spite of all the obstructions which would have reduced a less determined spirit to despondency and inaction; and finally persuaded almost all the Jarejahs of any consequence in the country to subscribe such an engagement to renounce the abominable custom, as expressly subjects them, by their own consent, to a punishment from the British and Gaikawar governments in every subsequent instance of infanticide. At the date of the latest notices here inserted, the Colonel had remained long enough at Baroda to ascertain that the measure was proving effectual, and to receive the most gratifying demonstrations of gratitude and joy from both the mothers and fathers whose offspring he had thus reduced them to a kind of necessity of preserving. He is one of that privileged and enviable class of men whom Providence has employed, each to accomplish *some one* grand distinct operation in the great process of reforming the world.

It is in a train of happy moral revolutions, correspond-

ing to this, that we earnestly hope we see the intention of Providence in facilitating what appears so strange an irregularity in the economy of the world, as the acquisition of a vast empire in Asia by the people of this island. We do not know in what way those persons among us who do not care for such revolutions, or who deprecate and hate the projects for effecting them, maintain their complacency on the subject of India, amidst the evidence, growing every year more glaring, that *in any other view* our Indian successes are a great and almost unmixed calamity. We know not in what way,—unless they are expecting the state of the case to be reversed in consequence of a miracle of moral transformation speedily to be wrought upon the managers of power in this ill-fated world. Unless this shall come to pass, we must expect that India,—which used to be dreamed and ranted about as an exhaustless source of wealth to the nation,—will continue to be, no one can conjecture how long, a most destructive drain on our domestic resources, absolutely a pit to throw the hard earnings of the English people into, and at the same time a pernicious vent for an influence that is poisoning our morals. But the period must some time arrive when either wisdom or necessity will change this condition of things; and in the mean while it will be a consolation, and partly even a compensation, to the benevolent and religious part of the community, that the English power in India is operating as the cause of most important innovations among the people; in some particular instances by a direct authoritative interference, and more generally by that indirect and even involuntary sanction and weight which the supreme power in the country necessarily gives to whatever benevolent and pious undertakings it protects. For how many wasted millions (no apology, however, for the men and the system that have wasted them) will it be a *moral* compensation, that, twenty years hence, there will be very many thousands of human beings of an age to reflect with gratitude, that it has been owing to English interference that they were not all murdered in their natal hour; and who will therefore have a most powerful

motive to receive with favour, and to consent to promote, the measures by which the English may at that time be solicitous to diffuse among them civilization and Christianity. And if at length a general civilization and Christianity in India shall be the result of such measures as could *not have been prosecuted so effectually but under advantage of the ascendancy of the English power*, what a triumphant balance of good will this be (still no thanks to corrupt and ambitious men) against that grievous pecuniary burden which the possession of India imposes on us, and will impose for a long time yet to come.

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[April, 1812.]

Memorandum on the Subject of the Earl of Elgin's Pursuits in Greece.
8vo.

WHEN Phidias, who made in Athens, and makes in this tract, so distinguished a figure, was performing the process under which a rude block of marble was to become a beautiful and majestic human form, he despised no implement or operation, however slight, which could in any manner or degree contribute to the perfection of that intended form. There is in this world, under the denomination of the human mind, a rude and perverse intellectual substance, incomparably harder to be brought to any thing like a perfect shape, than any piece of stone that the artist ever had to work upon. It is, however, under a grand process: and we have sanguine hopes that it will come forth, at length, wrought to a degree of excellence which will contrast, wonderfully and delightfully with its former condition. This excellence must include, and partly consists in, a highly improved faculty for the general perception of order and beauty,—an intelligence not only of the chief relations and harmonies in metaphysical and moral truth, but also of that kind of rectitude which constitutes order and beauty in the material world. Beyond all question there is such an analogy throughout all the subjects of knowledge, that the faculty of perceiving and admiring the true and the beautiful in higher subjects of contemplation, will be in some certain degree qualified and disposed to perceive and admire them in the inferior classes of subjects. If, therefore, we anticipate a noble amendment in the general state of the human mind, we may expect that, along with increasing rectitude of ideas concerning truth in subjects of primary importance, there will be an improvement in the justness of apprehension relatively to

the subjects of what we call Taste. And we may justly be gratified that the process is actively and effectually going on in civilized society, for promoting this subordinate part of our intellectual improvements—provided the means be not too expensive, and the measure of time and operation out of all proportion to what is given to much more important matters.

No doubt it would be far the most pleasing to a man with a right comparative estimate of the different parts of that general improvement, toward which it is assumed that the intellect of society is in progression, to see the most forward points of the advance to be in the direction of the improvements that are the most important. He would be extremely happy to see the civilized world making a progress in the wisdom of religion, morals, politics, and legislation, with a much slower growth towards a finished judgment in architecture, sculpture, and painting. Nor would scarcely any state of the social mind appear to him more perverted and contemptible, than that in which these refinements of art and taste should be making a distinguished advance, while superstition or scepticism were repressing religion, while a loose moral code extenuated profligacy, and a barbarous legislation was sanctioned or permitted by the prevalence of absurd political opinions.

It were vain, however, to hope, as yet, of such a perverse and frivolous company of beings as mankind, that, even when in a course of improvement, they should give a precedence to the most important pursuits. We must be content to think it, for the present, a great thing, if they are any where making one-fifth part of the progress in religious and political illumination that they do in the cultivation of taste. Let civilized society, or any particular nation, but manifest such a degree of amelioration in respect to the more serious concerns of human nature, as to give unequivocal signs that men are really approaching a considerably higher state of wisdom and virtue, under an impulse that it is not likely to remit,—let thus much be realized of the more indispensable kinds of improvement, and it will so far indicate a general

soundness of the moral and intellectual system, as to prevent our suspecting the augmented passion for the fine arts to be a kind of exhalation from fermenting moral corruption. Though regretting to see it prevail in a greater degree, and with greater effect, than the zeal in nobler pursuits, we shall yet hope it will not, on the whole, counteract that zeal; and that, though it is operating very prematurely, its effects will ultimately combine with those of that nobler zeal, in the one grand result, the whole improvement of our nature. A philanthropist while thus pleased to see this improvement, (though disproportionate and premature,) of the human faculties in one mode of their application—because he anticipates that when at length this too forward attainment shall be overtaken by the more important ones, it will fall gracefully into the system of improvements, and be satisfied to hold a very subordinate place in it,—will not, of course, despise the means brought in aid of this subordinate part of our mental cultivation. Even the foolish extravagance of the enthusiasts for the fine arts, who will talk about the more prevailing study, or the improving style, of sculpture and painting, in such magnificent terms as they would have no patience to hear applied to the diffusion of Christianity, or the deliverance of a nation from an inveterate tyranny, — even this will not provoke him to deny that some small intellectual benefit may be derived, in England, from delineations of the ruins of Athenian structures, and from actual fragments of the statues, and bas reliefs with which they were once adorned. Put things in their right gradation, from the highest extreme to the lowest, and the man that gratefully exults in our having so long received from Judea, and indeed partly from Greece, the grand rectifier of our intellectual and moral faculties, in their most important relations—the Bible,—will not *therefore* fail to acknowledge the value (though certainly small according to his scale) of these latest contributions of Greece to discipline our faculties to a more correct perception of beauty in forms.

It is true that the Christians of the earlier ages, who inhabited the regions enriched with the superb and beautiful works of Pagan art, gave proof, by the zeal with which in some instances they defaced or demolished them, how little they combined with their affection for what instructed them in the most important truth and in their eternal interests, an esteem for what would have so powerfully assisted the formation of a perfect taste, in themselves and their posterity. And, assuredly, it will be doing them no wrong to say, that if they *had* been possessed, or desirous to be possessed, of so judicious a taste as would be required to constitute a part of that high general cultivation of the mind, which it may be hoped mankind will one day attain, their zeal to destroy these works would have been much more restrained. But still, if the Christians, in the time of Theodosius and the following periods, had possessed as fine a taste as the Athenians in the age of Pericles, they must necessarily have beheld the grand and beautiful apparatus of idolatry in a very different light from that in which its remains may now be contemplated. These miracles, as in a poetical licence of phrase they may be called, wrought by genius and art in support of the Pagan superstitions, would not *now*, if they could even reappear in all their pristine glory, revive one idolatrous emotion in favour of Jupiter, or Apollo, or Minerva. None, perhaps, of the seductions that have acted extensively on the human mind, has ever been so completely annihilated as that of the mythology, taken distinctly from the morality, of the Greeks and Romans. The admiration and delight therefore, with which an intelligent disciple of the true religion might behold these wonders of human ability, would be unmixed with any apprehension that the true God will ever, for them, have one worshipper the less; and would be repressed only by the retrospective thought, what sublime talents were once profaned in the service of a detestable superstition, and how powerfully such labours must have contributed to confirm its ascendancy. But how different was the whole view of the subject to the early Christians. To

them the *superstitious* character of these great works was, necessarily, beyond all comparison, the most prominent character. They beheld these magnificent structures, and they *truly* beheld them, as having been proud war-like forts, raised, most directly and precisely, in hostility to the God of heaven, and zealously maintained in that very use almost to that very day. It was by an easy recollection that they were reminded of that doom of utter demolition, commanded by that God to be executed, under the former dispensation, on such structures, and by a natural association that his fervent worshippers were incensed against the very walls which had hardly ceased to be marked with the flagrant signs, and to ring with the sounds of their hostility. They regarded these edifices as the abodes, but just vacated, and, in the belief of some of their fellow citizens, not yet vacated, of devils; as the fresh and portentous vestiges, therefore, of a grand attempt to make this world formally a province of the infernal kingdom. Nor were they, in this notion, *substantially* wrong; for the power and agency of evil that dwelt in these fanes, and emanated from them, could not well have been greater if they had really been places of diabolical residence. Men glowing and shuddering with sentiments like these,—in other words, men feeling with a right degree of emphasis that the true and a false religion are the greatest good and evil in the whole world, and extending, according to a natural law of the mind, an inferior but proportionate sentiment of complacency and abhorrence to the machinery and circumstances of this good and evil,—would find in the magnitude, the harmony of proportion, the beauty of shapes, the perfection of workmanship, but little to subdue the antipathy excited in viewing these fine performances as the instrumental auxiliaries of the greatest of all evils.

Besides, consider the mischief they were still doing by assisting to prolong the partial prevalence of superstition. They greatly contributed to keep the Pagan sentiments in operation, and the Pagan notions in a state of distinctness, by furnishing fixed visible types for all their vain fancies, and embodying those fancies by

means of those types in almost every possibility of grace and dignity. Those who were insensibly declining from idolatry, less through the influence of direct conviction than of the ascendancy which Christianity was acquiring in the Roman Empire, and at the imperial court, would often be recalled to their ancient veneration for their gods by again contemplating the beauty or majesty of their images and temples; and these imposing and enchanting forms would pre-occupy, beyond all chance of expulsion, the imaginations of children, forming there more exquisite associations with Pagan ideas than could ever be formed with ideas of any other order. Indeed this profuse display of grace and sublimity would operate, not only in the way of captivating the fancy, but also as an argument to the understanding. For, at first view, and previously to some religious illumination, it would seem as if it never could be, that that whole system of notions should be fantastic, delusive, and detestable, which had been able to consolidate and display itself in a material form so vast, so durable, and so rich in the creations of the first genius and skill in the world, in almost the only productions of art in any way worthy to be compared with those of nature.

And thus, while all cultivated men will unite in regretting, and very deeply regretting, that those finest performances of art, which would *now* do none of this harm, and would contribute much to perfect our taste, have been in a great measure destroyed, we think it should appear that there are very considerable excuses for that persecution of statues and shrines, in which we verily believe some of our bewitched devotees to the fine arts regard the early Christians as having committed little less than most atrocious wickedness. At the same time, we shall all join most cordially in the condemnation of those (and without doubt there were many such) who were actuated rather by the spirit of barbarians than of Christians; who comprehended, perhaps, or cared very little about the power of this heathen sublimity and beauty to prolong the dominion of superstition in the beholders, but were delighted to find them-

selves at liberty to demolish what they knew was held in high esteem by their enemies, and the more delighted as they understood these great works to be reputed the monuments of incomparable genius. The same resentment is felt against all the subsequent dilapidators, of whatever nation or faith, down to the present vile Turkish barbarians; and it is felt with peculiar force against the Venetian army or general that destroyed the greatest part of the temple of Minerva at Athens, which had remained nearly entire till the latter part of the seventeenth century.

The little that still remains of the unrivalled works of Grecian art follows most strictly the rule of value in the Sibyl's leaves. Unless some happy revolution shall put the country once called Greece under a civilized government, (which, with submission to the *amateurs* of the fine arts, we think might be almost as desirable on account of the people as of the sculptures,) another half century may go far towards obliterating for ever all the more delicate workmanship, and leaving only some defaced bulks of ruin. Under such circumstances it does really seem to become a concern of the civilized world to preserve, by taking it away, some small portion of what is moveable, and to obtain the most accurate delineations of both what is probably destined to perish, and what may be able to preserve itself by mere size and weight. It might not imply any extravagance of passion for the arts, if a man should be of opinion that an effectual plan for possessing ourselves of all that can be supplied, in all ways, for the illustration of the principles of beauty, from the relics of the ancient works in Greece, would be fully as respectable a national object as some things, so called, on which millions have been expended by this or the neighbouring countries. The Earl of Elgin, previously to his going out Ambassador Extraordinary to the Ottoman Porte, in 1799, suggested some notion partly tending to such an object to those who had at that time the national projects and the national revenues in their management. The suggestion however was not entertained; the ministerial conscience being

exquisitely delicate respecting the expenditure of the public money; and his Lordship's casuistry perhaps failing to satisfy it, that the money which was destined to enlighten nobility, and stimulate patriotism, could be diverted, consistently with scrupulous integrity, to the less palpable utility of obtaining for the nation some of the finest means in existence for assisting the cultivation of its taste. His proposal was, that the government should "send out English artists, of known eminence, as modellers, architects, and draughtsmen, to rescue from oblivion, with the most accurate detail, whatever specimens of architecture and sculpture in Greece had still escaped the ravages of time, and the barbarism of conquerors." This project being declined, as of too doubtful issue to warrant the expense, "Lord Elgin then endeavoured to engage some of these artists at his own charge; but the value of their time was far beyond his means."

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Perhaps the "restoring" of any of the decayed and mutilated sculptures, in the drawings, may be regarded as rather a work of supererogation, an exercise of talent on a kind of sacred ground, to which the artist had but a questionable right. A few examples of this supplemental work may be an acceptable aid to the imagination; but in general it will be preferable to be left to perfect our own ideal picture upon the traces remaining of the ancient forms. And as it is to be presumed that all the objects thus represented with the sculptures restored, will also be represented in the engravings in their state of defacement, the spectators may fix tenaciously on these latter, and refuse to let the artist's restorations take place in their imagination, if they are very peculiarly anxious not to be betrayed into a falsified idea of the ancient performances.

The operations of this corps of artists were not confined to Athens, nor to the delineation of objects in detail.

"All the remains of architecture and sculpture which could be traced through several other parts of Greece, have been measured and delineated, with the most scrupulous exactness, by the second architect,

Ittar. And picturesque views of Athens, of Constantinople, of various parts of Greece, and of the islands of the Archipelago, have been executed by Don Tita Lusieri."

Their office was much like that of taking the portrait of a dying subject; for they found whatever was the most exquisite and vulnerable—the sculpture which had diffused over the marble structures a mimic life, by the richest forms and scenes of poetry—perishing, almost while they were looking at it, under the barbarism of the Turks. The marks of recent mutilation gave them cause to apprehend that many of the beautiful shapes and groups which they were drawing would not remain to be delineated by any future artists. It is not improbable that by this time a portion of them are obliterated; and that the fewer there are which remain, the more zealously will these barbarians labour at their destruction, as seeing themselves nearer the end of their task. So that Lord Elgin's undertaking was at the very latest period of time for securing to us an accurate representation of any tolerable number of those most consummate instances of the power of genius and art, to bring, if we may have leave so to express it, enchanting society for cultivated men out of blocks of stone. He tells us that "the Turks will frequently climb up the ruined walls, and amuse themselves in defacing any sculpture they can reach; or in breaking columns, statues, or other remains of antiquity, in the fond expectation of finding within them some hidden treasures."

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It might have been supposed that all the true lovers of arts in Europe, and even, if there were any such, among the native inhabitants of Athens, would agree that he was in the right: and regret that he could not carry off ten times more, unless there had been any cause to hope for a rescue from some other quarter. Certain of our polished neighbours, however, would have been better pleased, we have no doubt, that the last of the works of Phidias should have been reduced to mortar for another Turkish fort, than preserved for perpetuity in the possession and almost idolatrous reve-

rence of the English. And indeed it seems to have been with no small difficulty that Lord Elgin was enabled to put any of them out of the reach of this former destiny; for all the interest which he possessed with the Turkish government as Ambassador of England, was but just enough, when exerted to the utmost, to obtain the fragments which he wished to bring away; whether it was that, perceiving him extremely intent on his object, they wished to make a great merit of conceding it, or that they too must pretend some partiality for these fine works, and, knowing no use of them but to make lime, would be understood as setting a peculiarly high price on their exemption from that use. Between this Turkish mode of amateurship, and the intriguing hostility of the French, it appears a piece of wonderful good fortune that so many got fairly out of the country; and though a portion of them were lost in a shipwreck off the island of Cerigo, we are glad to find that the number finally secured is so considerable.

“Lord Elgin made use of all his means, and ultimately with such success, that he has brought to England, from the ruined temples at Athens, from the modern walls and fortifications, in which many fragments had been used as so many blocks of stone, and from excavations made on purpose, a greater quantity of original Athenian sculpture, in statues, alti and bassi relievi, capitals, cornices, frizes, and columns, than exists in any other part of Europe.”—p. 10.

He is in possession of several of the original metopes from the temple of Minerva, representing the battles between the Centaurs and Lapithæ, at the nuptials of Perithous. The figures are in such high relief as to seem groupes of statues, and they are in general finished with as much attention behind as before. Some sculptures in low relief appear to have been obtained from the frieze, which “was carried along the top of the walls of the cell,” and represented, in a continual series of six hundred feet in length, “the whole of the solemn procession to the temple of Minerva during the Panathenaic festival.” By digging in the site of a Janizary’s house, which he purchased and demolished for this purpose, he obtained parts of the statues of Victory and Minerva,

and of other figures, which had been placed over the grand entrance from the west. From the dilapidated tympanum over the opposite portico he took several colossal figures; a figure denominated the Theseus, which is "universally admitted," he says, "to be superior to any piece of statuary ever brought into England;" and "a horse's head, which far surpasses any thing of the kind, both in the truth and spirit of the execution; the nostrils are distended, the ears erect, the veins swollen, one might also say throbbing; his mouth is open, and he seems to neigh with the conscious pride of belonging to the Ruler of the Waves." He brought away, besides, specimens of all the parts of the architecture, so that "the practical architect may examine into every detail of the building." Specimens were also obtained from the Propylæa, from the temples dedicated to Neptune and Erectheus, Minerva Polias, and the nymph Pandrosos, and from the remains of a temple of Venus between Athens and Eleusis. Moulds were taken from the most beautiful of the ornaments.

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The opening of the various Tumuli has supplied a complete collection of Greek vases. The spoils of one, which Lord Elgin conjectures to have perhaps been the tomb of Aspasia, were peculiarly rich. He obtained "the very ancient sun-dial, which existed at the theatre of Bacchus during the time of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides." Many ancient bas reliefs and inscriptions were obtained in the churches and convents of Athens, which Lord Elgin obtained the archbishop's permission to examine. "The peasants of Athens generally put into a niche over the door of their cottages, any fragment they discover in ploughing the fields. Out of these were selected and purchased many various antique votive tablets, with sculpture and inscriptions."—The collection of inscriptions "comprehends specimens of every remarkable peculiarity in the variations of the Greek alphabet, throughout the most interesting period of Grecian history."

Having completed this rich assemblage, Lord Elgin

became anxious to determine on some plan for rendering it the most effectually serviceable to the arts. The one adopted has been, in the first place, the formation, in London, of a Museum, in which the whole of the most valuable acquisitions are to be exhibited to the inspection of the public. And, as far as appears, it is intended, by the aid of a fund expected to arise from this exhibition, to publish engravings, executed in the most perfect style, of the drawings in the architectural department, at a rate of expense not above the means of professional men. These drawings are completely prepared. It does not appear whether it is intended to publish engravings of the statues and bas reliefs. It is decided there shall be no attempt to *restore* the mutilations. This had at first been intended; and Lord Elgin went to Rome to engage the celebrated Canova in the undertaking; but after examining some specimens, and informing himself of the general quality of the collection, that artist declared "it would be sacrilege in him, or any other man, to presume to touch them with a chisel."

Thus we have secured the possession of a small specimen of the very utmost that human ability could ever accomplish in this department; and really we should think we could not well do it greater injustice in the estimate than to entertain any such expectation as Lord Elgin most unaccountably avows in his concluding sentence,—that "sculpture may soon be raised in England to rival the ablest productions of the best times of Greece."

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[April, 1812.]

Sermons on the Person and Office of the Redeemer, and on the Faith and Practice of the Redeemed. By WILLIAM JESSE, M.A. 8vo.

No literary class can be named, in which the present acting persons have less respect for their predecessors, and, we might say, for one another, than in that of sermon writers. They are perfectly aware that—without going so far back as the puritan divines, and the learned and eloquent churchmen of the latter part of the seventeenth century—a prodigious number of books of sermons have been published within the lifetime and the memory of the elder portion of readers now living. By a glance over the catalogues of two or three of the London booksellers, it might probably be seen that the shelves of nearly a whole room, of competent dimensions for a study, might be filled by the assemblage of volumes which would be formed by single copies of all the books of sermons that have been published in English, within less than a hundred years past. Now with what estimate do the present numerous writers of sermons regard this vast accumulation of kindred performances? It is obvious, that their own multitude of volumes cannot engage so much as they wish them to do of the public attention, without an almost entire dismissal, from that attention, of these preceding labours. And why are they to be thus consigned to neglect? Is it deemed that books of this class are necessarily transitory, through some peculiar fatality, which destroys them without regard to the qualities which they may possess or want; and that therefore the reading of sermons will cease, if there be not a continued supply from authors who are, of course, resigned to the destiny under which *their* works also, in their turn, are soon to perish? Or is it, that

this accumulation affords really so very few books that deserve to live,—so diminutive a portion of sound doctrine and good writing, that absolutely the relief of an insupportable destitution of religious truth and eloquence is the object of the present very rapid issue of volumes of sermons? Unless the works of the very numerous former contributors to this part of our literature, are regarded as thus necessarily fugitive, or thus indigent of the qualities indispensable to render them instructive and impressive, it may be difficult to find a plausible reason for that eagerness to publish volumes of sermons so manifest of late years. And even then, it will remain somewhat wonderful, how so very many persons have been freed from all doubt as to their own competency to carry on the course of this written instruction, in the best and ablest manner of those who have had their day, or to furnish such reasoning and eloquence, as those who have had their day are to sink into oblivion for having failed to exhibit. Some of these writers have such an estimate of themselves, and their predecessors, and even their contemporaries, in the same department, that they will confess they have not taken all the pains they might to perfect their compositions. They could not in conscience stay to do it, so affected were they at the view of the afflictive public want of such a book as theirs. The community had among them only some few millions of volumes of serious sermons, and were constantly receiving only a few thousands more each month: and therefore who could be sure that souls might not “perish for lack” of the means of “knowledge,” if these latest sermon writers delayed the publication of their books, in order to labour them to the greatest attainable fitness for conveying instruction?

The author of the present volume has not offended in the way of violent haste from the pulpit to the printing office, for these sermons are a selection from those which “he has been in the habit of writing and preaching to his parishioners during the last twenty years;”—but we question whether the case will be found in every point so unexceptionable.

"He wishes the reader to understand and remember, that these sermons were not written with any design to publish them ; and, that they are presented to him as they were delivered from the pulpit. If, as compositions, they are not below what any one may expect to hear in a country church, and in a mixed congregation of people of various ranks, it may not be thought presumption in him to hope that these sermons may be more useful to the generality of readers, than compositions intended for the critical eye of the learned."—p. xvi.

This sounds like the language of apology, and, in some degree, of humility ; but what does it virtually say ? It says, that, while there are before the public, partly in the form of sermons, and partly of treatises, an immense number of theological books, of which number a proportion, comprising, in point of quantity, more than most men will ever have time to read, are of excellent tendency, and were matured with deliberate study, by able men, who made a patient and earnest exertion to display the subjects with the utmost possible clearness and force—it says that Mr. Jesse, quite aware of all this, thinks there is nothing like arrogance in calling on readers to employ a share of the time due to such works, in perusing a volume of such sermons as he is in the habit of preparing for the weekly services of his parish ;—strict care being taken that, having been intended only for this use, they do not undergo any improvement when selected for a higher.

Nor is this all. He thinks that printed instructions, brought out in this manner, may even be "more useful to the generality of readers" than compositions intended for learned and critical ones ;—not meaning, we presume, more useful than they would have been if they had contained direct matters of learning and criticism ; that is too flatly evident to be worth saying ; but more useful to them than they would have been if the *general tenor* of the composition had been intended to satisfy the "critical eye."—Here we shall be allowed to ask, *what* is it that the "critical eye of the learned" demands in a theological composition, when direct learning and criticism are out of the question ? What is it, but a definite general statement of the subject ? What, but a lucid

natural order in the series of explanations? What, but perfect conception in each of the thoughts, and clear expression in each of the sentences, together with such a connexion in the succession of thoughts and sentences, as to make them all intelligibly and forcibly lead to the intended point? And are not these properties of a composition which the critical reader *requires*, the very things which the "generality of readers" *need*? Is it not the first object, and a most difficult one, to give those readers a clear *understanding* of the subject? And the way to do this is, to treat it in such a mode of composition as a truly "critical eye" would perceive to have the primary qualities of *good* composition.—We have met with not a few occasions of indulging some degree of wonder at a notion, that less careful labour is necessary in writing, in proportion as the expected readers are less disciplined by learning and criticism! As if their not having been accustomed to accurate thinking, rendered them just so much the more capable of deriving clear ideas from negligent writing.

On the whole of this matter, we think it is not easy, in the present circumstances of literature, to be guilty of an excess, in censuring that presumptuous contempt of higher examples, that low valuation of people's time, and that indifference, in part at least, to the purpose professed,—their instruction,—which are manifested in coming on the public with compositions, executed in a hasty and imperfect manner, and accompanied by an avowal, in effect, that the instruction of the readers was not deemed an object to make it worth while to attempt any improvement in those compositions. It is really quite time for the writers of sermons to be admonished, that when they are resolving on publication, they should condescend to admit such a sense of the extent of their duty, as would be impressed by reflecting a few moments, what *other* sermons in the language the persons to be instructed *might* be reading, during the time they are expected to employ in reading the volumes now to be presented to them: and we cannot think a very lenient language is due to writers who have never

made this reflection, or have evidently disdained to profit by it.

The unusual length of the preface to this volume seemed to intimate that there must be something peculiar, and requiring preparatory explanation, in the design or execution; and we presumed that an attentive perusal of it would qualify us to go forward. We must confess, however, that in more than one attentive reading, we failed to reach the meaning. It is a most confused attempt to distinguish between "essential truths" and "subordinate truths," in the Christian religion, and to instruct contemporary preachers to dwell much more, than it is believed they do, on the former class. These "essential truths" are limited, in some undefined or ill-defined way, to "the doctrines concerning the Person and Office of the Redeemer," those doctrines being, as far as we are enabled to conjecture, so understood as to exclude, and consign to the subordinate class, the greatest number of the truths declared in the scriptures;—so understood as to exclude doctrines which must constitute much of the practical meaning of the term *office*, as applied to the Messiah. For instance, the doctrine of justification by faith is specified as not being one of the "essential truths;" and we find in the "subordinate" class the doctrine of "that great defect in our common nature, as destitute of the spirit of holiness, and prone in all its tendencies to earthly things," and of "our utter insufficiency, without the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, to will and do any thing which is spiritually good." And though such "subordinate truths" are allowed to have their importance, it is represented that what is essentially the gospel may be effectually apprehended without them.

"He that rightly apprehends the personal character and office of the Redeemer, may be wise unto salvation, though he be ignorant of every thing else; or, though he know little or nothing distinctly of the subordinate truths, or mistakes their meaning."—p. vi.

As if the office of the Redeemer were something substantive and absolute, instead of a *relation* which he has assumed to the human race, the nature and effect of

which relation are defined or explained by a combination of those doctrines which would here be denominated subordinate.—It is very much at hazard, however, that we make any attempt at stating the import of this long preface.

The reader will be freed in a good measure from this difficulty of understanding, when he advances into the sermons themselves,—which are on the following subjects. The Antiquity, Importance, and Truth of the Doctrine of Salvation—Isaiah's Prophecy of the Saviour's Advent—the Birth of Jesus Christ—Calling his name Jesus—the Humility of Christ—Christ our great High Priest—the scriptural Doctrine of Redemption—a Resurrection of the Dead, the Doctrine of both the Testaments—the Resurrection of Christ and ours equally certain—our Saviour's Ascension into Heaven—preaching Christ crucified—the unchangeable Friend—the Author of eternal Salvation to them that obey him—the true Vine—the Divine Mercy, and the Christian Temper and Conduct—Christian Practice—Christian Charity—doing the Will of God—the Gospel hid to them that are lost.

It will be perceived, that, though there is not much speciality in the subjects, they are chiefly of one general character; and the selection of the sermons, we are informed, was determined by the subjects, “and not at all by any conceit of excellence in their composition.” Though there is a slight peculiarity in the author's view of Christianity, these subjects are presented, substantially, in the same light as in the ordinary ministrations of evangelical preachers. The doctrines are not stated with any remarkable precision, nor maintained with any steady process of argument. The composition is indeed, for the most part, quite loose and immethodical; a succession of thoughts, connected or not connected, as the case may happen—easily occurring to a mind not accustomed to any severity of intellectual discipline—and hastily thrown on paper just as they occurred. A large proportion of them are perfectly common-place. Here and there they carry a degree of point and discrimination.

A few of them are considerably raised and bold: and now and then they are extravagant, from carelessness or from system. Of this last description we have noticed several instances besides these two. "He" (the Mediator) "must be able to do, what seems to require a greater exertion of almighty power, than the production of matter and of intelligent existences; he must secure the glory of the divine perfections, in a dispensation of mercy and grace towards guilty and depraved creatures." (p. 60.) "—— the eternal salvation of millions, and of *millions of millions*, of fallen creatures," &c. &c. (p. 39.) It is needless to say that this is a number vastly exceeding, in all probability, the whole assembly at the last day. And as to the former passage, it seems very unthinking to represent any effort or proof of power as greater than the creation of something out of nothing. The whole strain of the sermons indicates, we think, much genuine piety and zeal, great familiarity with the Scriptures (quoted, however, too much in masses), and very little personal ostentation. The exhortations are serious and earnest, and the whole language runs on in a free inartificial manner. Our great complaint is, that there is but little accurate, sterling, useful thinking; but little to make any reader feel that he better comprehends any part of religion. There is also a great sameness of sentiment through the volume. And this is a natural consequence of that peculiarity we have alluded to, in the mode in which he contemplates revealed truth, and zealously insists that every Christian instructor should apprehend and display it. The peculiarity consists in a frequent express repetition, and a habitual systematical observance, of a principle formed on a strained inference from the apostle's determination, expressed to the Corinthians, "not to know any thing among them, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." It may be presumed that all enlightened and devout readers of the Bible, must clearly perceive the grand pre-eminence of the doctrine of a Mediator among the doctrines of that revelation; must perceive that this great truth, or rather combination of truths (for it comprises in its

very essence several truths in detail) throws a peculiar light over the whole system of moral and religious truths, and places them all in a certain relation to itself; and that therefore a Christian speculator must contemplate them, reason on them, and inculcate them, in that light and that relation, from a conviction that otherwise his view of them will be incomplete or deceptive. But what Mr. Jesse insists on, is something different from this. Nothing, to be sure, could well be stated with less precision than his view of the subject, though it is so often reverted to; and we cannot hope to make it intelligible by saying—that his principle is, that all religious and moral truth, at least all that a Christian can consistently regard or teach, is in some manner formally contained in, and absolutely of a piece with, the doctrine of a suffering Saviour; insomuch that no point of morals and religion can with propriety be argued or enforced, otherwise than as a constituent part of this comprehensive doctrine. Whatever may be the precise nature and extent of the principle, it aims to assert something much more than that the doctrine on all moral and theological subjects should be so taught, as to be strictly in *coincidence* with the chief points in the theory of the mediatorship of Christ, so as to form consistent adjuncts to that theory, and compose, together with it, and in conformity to it, one wide and complicated, but harmonious system. It is obvious, even to Mr. Jesse, that all the vast assemblage of important propositions which constitute the grand whole of moral and religious truth, cannot be *identical* with those distinct propositions, which enounce specifically the mediatorship of Christ, or the several parts or views of that mediatorship; but he will have all those numerous propositions so *consubstantial* (if we may so express it) with these particular and comparatively few propositions, that all the diversified truths they express, or seem to express, shall be but modifications or parts of the doctrine enounced in these propositions respecting the mediatorship. Or, at last, all the truths that are fit for Christian use must so be consubstantial with that doctrine; and thus all right statement of religious and

moral truth will strictly be, in substance, preaching Christ "crucified." We are aware that these lines of ours will appear extremely obscure, though we may think them sun-beams of light and precision compared with those of our author. If they do not convey something like his doctrine (we really cannot be certain of the identity), we wish that either it had been better explained, or all printed enlargement on it forborne.

The effect of such a principle, in its practical observance in teaching religion, will be, either the exclusion from notice of a great number of important truths and moral maxims held forth in the comprehensive instructions of the Bible, and deducible from just reasoning on its declarations; or a most laborious systematic endeavour—not to exhibit all the truths in harmony, on the grand basis of the mediatorial economy, but—to force them all into one form, of course to constrain some of them to seem to be different truths from what they really are—if there be not too much absurdity in such an expression. In either of these ways, the system of religion and morals will be rendered vastly narrower than the Bible, and presented to inquiring minds in a form, which they must abjure their most established rules of right thinking in order even to understand.

What we have tried to describe as the characteristic peculiarity of these sermons, appears in so many passages, scattered through the volume, is so incompletely expressed in any one of them, and is complicated everywhere with so much that is perfectly true and common, that we could not, without a great deal of room and trouble, give the quotations requisite to exemplify that peculiarity.

We would very willingly extend this article, if many words were necessary to express, that, while we question the necessity of this publication, we have a strong conviction of the piety and zeal of the author, and that the volume contains much which it is very useful to preach, though it be by no means necessary to print.

[August, 1812.]

The Life of Richard Cumberland, Esq. ; embracing a Critical Examination of his various Writings. With an occasional literary Inquiry into the Age in which he lived, and the Contemporaries with whom he flourished. By WILLIAM MUDFORD. 8vo.

WHEN we had read and dismissed, about six years since, the garrulous and entertaining work in which Mr. Cumberland himself narrated the history of his life and literary labours, and to which he added a small supplement in 1807, we could have been most perfectly content that these "Memoirs," with another brief supplement to be added in due time, by the hand of some sensible friend, to relate the concluding part of a then far advanced life, should remain the sole record of a long and indefatigable literary career. In thinking it quite sufficiently ample and comprehensive, at least as relating to himself and his works, we probably agreed with the author. He was evidently in no disposition to be parsimonious of his communications, nor to deem even very slight circumstances too insignificant to interest the public, and we may be sure he would tell all he thought of consequence to be known. What *he* thought of too little importance the reader had very good cause for reconciling himself to think so too. Nor was there any reason for suspecting disingenuousness in the relation ; nor indeed, if there had, would it, in many points, have been easy to ascertain the deceptiveness of the representation, or perhaps of any great moment to do it, however practicable. With regard to his writings, the principal work in point of value, the *Observer*, had so long found its proper place in public estimation, that it was a matter of trifling importance whether the author appreciated it with perfect correctness or not. And as to the very long list of dramatic performances, we could

see, after protesting against the stage itself, whoever might furnish its amusements, no great harm in their being suffered to go at his own critical price, whether estimated relatively to one another, or to the dramatic performances of his contemporaries. And indeed it should seem that little pains, in the way of valuation of them, are likely to be taken by other people henceforward; for it appears that but very few of them now remain in possession of the stage, and their being ever again much read, is doubtless quite out of the question. The more gloomy tribe of literary prognosticators, profess to apprehend that a fate not eminently more indulgent, awaits his other poetry; to some of which no one denies considerable merit. But unfortunately for the lasting popularity of moderately good poetry, every successive generation of readers is sure to have its own full fresh supply, which will, in its day, hold just the same claims, and engage the same attention, as the current poetical produce of the foregoing times did in *its* season,—an attention quite incompatible with the task of examining the mass of the middling poetry of those preceding times. It is therefore but a very diminutive space, as compared with the whole quantity of his printed composition, that Cumberland will occupy in our permanent literature; and as literature is the chief ground of whatever personal importance belongs to the man, as a subject of biography, we deemed that enough had been done to fix and perpetuate his fame, and even to discriminate his character, in the very ample volume of *Memoirs* written by himself.

Mr. Mudford, however, descried prospectively, during Cumberland's life time, a *desideratum* which we will quote his own words to define.

"When the *Memoirs* of Cumberland were published, I was forcibly impressed with their insufficiency in all that regarded the estimation of his literary character; and while I found in them all that could be wished about the man, I was *conscious* that whenever his death should happen, an ample and interesting opportunity would occur for the union of this personal history with a minute inquiry into the pretensions of the author. In what way, however, I conceived this scheme might be

executed, may be easily known from the following pages, which I have endeavoured to make as interesting as I could. If I have failed, I will not seek to mitigate censure by an appeal to indulgence."—p. ix.

The business then of the present work is to go over again the ground of Cumberland's life, for the purpose chiefly of coming at his works, in their succession, and passing upon them a critical and final judgment; scattering however, by the way, a variety of moral observations suggested by the particulars that come into the narration. Now, in the first place, as to the new-cast story of the person's life, this, at any rate, is most completely a work of supererogation, when the writer is obliged to confess explicitly that he has nothing new to tell, and that he relies entirely on Cumberland's own "Memoirs." In this portion of his undertaking he must of necessity be reduced to relate in a comparatively faint and cold style, what the author of the *Memoirs* had related with the liveliness of personal consciousness, memory, and interest; or to transcribe the very words of that work, and thus, under the semblance of a new book, offer a sort of mutilated reprint of the old one. This latter method has been practised by the present author to an almost unprecedented, and an altogether unpardonable extent. He inserts four, or six, or eight, and in some instances a still greater number of pages continuously, from the "*Memoirs*;" and so frequently that if all the sheer pieces of Cumberland's composition were brought together, they would be found to form a most unconscionable proportion of the volume. And at the same time this stout plunderer shall seem to take credit for laudable service! by expressions such as—"the account is so interesting that the reader would hardly forgive me for withholding it:" meaning, of course, the reader who has perused it, and perhaps paid for it as a part of the "*Memoirs*,"—since other readers could know nothing about the omission. It is not at all to be wondered at, that the proprietors of Cumberland's book have called in the interference of the law, and obtained an "Injunction" restraining the sale of the present work.

In the next place, as to the critical trial and judgment on the numerous writings;—we should not perhaps with quite so much simplicity ask, what is the need or use of it, if we were more familiar with the theatre. As several of Cumberland's plays are still sometimes performed, it may very likely be a concern of some magnitude with the frequenters to be illuminated on the subject of the merits or faults of their respective plots, and to be qualified to dissertate on the characters of O'Flaherty, Belcour, Charlotte Rusport, &c., &c., &c. But still, it may be doubted whether many of these frequenters will take the trouble to read a book of biographical criticism to qualify themselves; whether, for the most part they may not very readily, either from their own taste, or from the fashionable notions among people around them, make up their opinions on these high matters, as far as they can have any question about them; whether, in short, it is of much consequence, if their opinions on points of dramatic propriety are absurd—or if they have none at all. It is indeed with no intention of prosecuting critical studies, that either the vulgar or the genteel rabble cram the theatre. Nor will they, we apprehend, feel much gratitude to the present writer, for the ready made estimates and discriminations of Cumberland's more noted plays, with which they may be here supplied; though it is possible enough that a few of them may avail themselves of such convenient means of appearing wiser than their companions.

If, however, it could have been decided, on any good grounds, that the public was in want of a new and formal critical estimate of the writings of an author, of whose works by far the greater part will subside, speedily and finally, out of the public attention, this desideratum might have been furnished in the express and compact form of a critical essay on those writings. And to adopt, instead of this method, the plan of constructing, under the title of a "Life," a large work on the basis of mere extracts, long and numerous, from Cumberland's own "Memoirs," does really appear to us one of the boldest feats in book-making we have ever witnessed; and our

wonder at the author's daring is excited afresh, at every re-inspection of his manner of working.

Perhaps it would not have been bad policy to maintain, in the execution of such a plan, an air of moderate assurance and self-complacency, that should avoid betraying any consciousness of much amiss in the concern, and of any need of apologies and deprecations. But surely it is a great abandonment of prudence, to go quite beyond this moderate strain of assumption, and take a high tone of merit, dignity, and independence; to obtrude the author ostentatiously where there is no occasion for his appearing at all; and to assert with a kind of indignant effort, *my unimpeachable right to declare my own opinions*, just before, or just after plundering, in full daylight, a dozen uninterrupted pages that another man has taken the pains to write. It is not exactly amidst such workmanship that egotism would have been expected to display itself. But this weed of literature has the faculty of growing on anything. We have seldom seen it more flourishing than in this work. There is no address employed to keep the important pronoun out of the way. It comes in full state at the head of each paragraph of dissenting and pronouncing. And sometimes an inverted Johnsonian construction of sentence augments the pomp. Adverting to Miss Seward's Letters, Mr. Mudford says, "Of this heterogeneous mass of vanity, pedantry, and virulence, let me take this occasion to give my opinion:" and lest there should be a danger of forgetting *who* is giving it, the great word returns upon us the times and ways following, within the space of half a page.

"I know not whether most to condemn the egregious egotism of this proceeding, or its folly. I can find only one excuse for it, and that is the writer's sex." "In passing from the principle which dictated this compilation to its conclusion, I do not find much to approve. I have been very thoroughly disgusted with her pertness, her affectation, and her vitiated style; and I have been more than disgusted with her rancour towards the memory of Johnson." "In what she writes I find neither dignity of sentiment, novelty of remark, nor acuteness of criticism."—p. 181.

It is very strange that the disgust which all authors, in

their turn, feel at the self-importance betrayed by their brother and sister performers, should not effectually admonish them all to be a little suspicious and careful of themselves in this particular. And a very moderate portion of this care and suspicion would teach them, how to construct their sentences, and enounce their opinions, without this perpetual and offensive prominence of—myself—as the authority, the oracle, the Apollo, to be personally recognized, and reverently thought of, by all the readers and hearers of the sentence and the opinion.

The first and best advice to the fraternity on the subject would be, to get rid, as fast as possible, of the vanity and self-importance itself: as this would be a most valuable and moral improvement, at the same time that it would save them, in the exercise of their literary callings, much of the trouble of taking care of appearances. But if this is really an exorbitant and hopeless requisition, from those of Adam's posterity who are born to the splendid inheritance of the quill, the next, and an indispensable obligation, is, the exercise of a discreet vigilance upon the operation of the wonderfully subtle and deceptive power which this same self-importance has, to infuse itself through the whole train of an author's language. Let each of the persons whom it is our unwelcome duty to admonish on this head, be persuaded at least to make an experiment on the effect of this vigilance, maintained through just one sheet of composition. Let them observe how many times, within such a space, a proposition or a query, which is just ready to come out in the grand style, with the mighty pronoun, representative of *ME*, may, by the discreet care here recommended, be intercepted, and humbled down to a plain impersonal sentence, without losing any thing of its sense. True it is, and much to be deplored, as one of the distresses of literature, that one cannot seem to *love* a sentence or a paragraph, even though one's own, half so well, when it has taken this sort of stranger character—when it in no shape contains or reflects *ME*—when *it* says the thing rather than makes *me* say it—when it

enounces a truth in such a kind of way, as if *I*, to whom the truth owes its importance, much more than to the fact of its *being* a truth, were not in existence. Truth is, confessedly, of much less importance in itself, than in the circumstance that we are its exhibitors; one decisive proof of which is, that we do not like it to be better exhibited by other people than we ourselves can exhibit it. It is therefore very mortifying to be obliged to leave out the words expressive of that which forms the grace and dignity of the whole matter; to see a page of dry sense (for *sense*, at least, it is *sure* to be, in virtue of the author, even while the composition does not repeat in every line that it is *his* words)—to see a page of sense spread out in dry impersonality, like cut and withered grass, when the thoughts might have been presented in the state of being undetached from their author, and growing in all the green and flowery vitality of egotism. Still, if the public taste *is* so perverse; if the readers *will* not be persuaded to take throughout every page of the book a deep interest about *me*, whoever I may be, but will universally, like my composition all the better for seeming to forget me; what *can* I in prudence do, but submit to their humour, and take my revenge, by secretly becalling them all for fools?

It is proper to observe, at the same time, that the mere prevention of the too frequent intrusion of the personal pronoun, though that, unfortunately, is a task so far surpassing the prudence of many of our writers, is by no means all that is required in order to repress completely, symptoms of self conceit, and make a writer appear to lose the very thought of himself in the interest and the labour of his subject.

It is not so much in reality as in appearance, that we have suspended our proper business in making these slight remarks; for the author before us is peccant in no small degree on this score of conceit. He begins in a style of great parade in his preface, in which, in a high-wrought tone of independence and superior virtue, he arraigns and castigates Sir James Bland Burgess about a voluntary offer of assistance in supplying materials for

the Life of Cumberland, made by the said Sir James, thankfully accepted by Mr. Mudford, (who, however we are to understand, could do very well without it,) and wilfully forgotten by Sir James. There is very stout and fierce lecturing of the knight or baronet; and perhaps if he has thus been made to know his duty the better all the rest of his life, the other readers may not be discontented to have nine or ten pages employed on a matter which might perfectly well have been competently disposed of in the same number of lines: but the subject has betrayed the writer into a very unreserved display of that self importance, which so often reappears in the course of the work.

In passing along the course of Cumberland's life, by the aid of his own Memoirs, Mr. Mudford often stops to take an occasion of delivering his opinions on some topic suggested by the history; and it is often done with great formality of style, and a good deal in the manner which seems to say—the subject is now going to be placed in its proper light once for all. We think there is a considerable portion of just observation in these essays; though we cannot persuade ourselves they make any very important addition to the speculations on morals and literature. We cannot do any thing more equitable to the writer's ability and manner, than extracting a few passages from some of these occasional portions of disquisition.

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In common with every man of principle, Cumberland was indignant at the iniquities of anonymous criticism, an evil which, as Mr. Mudford observes, “it is not likely that any remonstrances will diminish;” for, “as long as men can attack secure from retaliation, they will do it; for the leaven of malignity and envy is too intimately incorporated with our nature, not to ferment into action when it may be done with impunity.” Mr. Cumberland however projected a periodical work, in which the rule of assigning the names of the writers should be a security against the usual abuses of criticism. And perhaps he flattered himself that this bold and ingenuous

distinction of the London Review, would give it so powerful a rivalry with its anonymous contemporaries as either to compel them to a little more decorum, or diminish their popularity. We will transcribe Mr. Mudford's observations on the impracticability of conducting the work of critical censorship on this ingenuous plan, without incurring almost a necessity of deviating from strict honesty; while in the anonymous method such a deviation is a matter of free choice.

"If we could suppose that the most eminent names in modern literature would be found in the pages of a review, established upon a principle similar to Cumberland's, I do not think that any advantage would be gained beyond the abolition of some practices in anonymous criticism which are disgraceful to letters. The rigid integrity of a Brutus or a Cato must not be expected. Literary men constitute a sort of fraternity: they are usually acquainted with each other, or likely to be so; and the feelings of friendship and esteem would be perpetually clashing with the duties of the critic. Will the man who has dined at my table to-day, and partaken of my hospitality and kindness, sit down to-morrow, and *avowedly* endeavour to sink my character in the public estimation? No: unless he would be hunted from society he cannot do this; if he would be received as a member of it he must conform to its duties; and though the book I have published, may be bad, or vicious, or erroneous, yet the condemnation of it must not come *publicly* from the hand of my friend. The cause of sound literature would therefore be injured by such a scheme, and criticism would sink into a mere interchange of civilities and courtesies.

"Let it be imagined that such a plan had been projected fifty years ago, and that Johnson, Goldsmith, Burke, Reynolds, Garrick, and other eminent men, had consented to lend it the authority of their names, would it have been possible for them to exercise their judgments with real impartiality? I can conceive that they might, perhaps, have imitated other critical professors in merciless severity towards the humble, the obscure, and the unassuming delinquent, but we should surely have found them sufficiently polite, ceremonious, and affable towards each other. Nor could it be otherwise, living, as they did, in splendid intimacy together: and the influence of this feeling would have extended beyond themselves and their respective productions. It would have taken in the circle of each man's acquaintance, and embraced, consequently, in its wide circumference, every writer who had risen only to such comparative distinction as might entitle him to their friendship and notice. What then would have been their situation? Between Scylla and Charybdis. If they praised, the world would have accused them of adulation; if they censured, an outcry would have been raised against them for envy and malignity. They would not have avoided self-condemnation on the one hand, or the world's condemnation on the other. And would they have found an adequate reward for such persecution and trial

in the pecuniary remunerations of a bookseller? The answer is obvious. They would have spurned at the illusion which would mislead them under the guise of candour and honesty, and they would have left to venal and obdurate minds what only venal and obdurate minds could perform." —p. 570.

The extracts we have made are a fair, and this last we think a favourable specimen, of the quality and style of the performance. There are a variety of pertinent moral remarks on facts, and points of character. Considerable discrimination is sometimes shown in estimating the individual articles in the heaped assemblage of Cumberland's works; and the general estimate of his talents appears to us on the whole very just. It is but an extremely moderate language of admiration that Mr. Mudford is any where induced to express; on many of the enumerated literary performances he sets a low value; and he does not much spare the faults and weaknesses of Cumberland's character. At the same time, our author is not to be accused, we think, of being in any degree actuated by a spirit of malice and detraction. Credit will be given him for having honestly intended to place the merits of the character and the writings in a correct light. But it will hardly be allowed that there was any great necessity for the undertaking, or that it is here executed with a vigour or an elegance adequate to impart an adventitious interest to a subject that was not very interesting in itself.

A very few particulars are communicated concerning the short portion of Mr. Cumberland's life, from the publication of the supplement to his Memoirs to his death. His literary toils were exhausting and unremitted, and in so far as they were prosecuted as the indispensable means of subsistence they cannot be beheld without a pensive feeling. It may at the same time be doubted, whether the writer of so many successful works, especially as many of them were dramatic works, would have been in this situation in the last years of his life, if the virtue of prudence had not been rather loosely held in the former ones. The claim to sympathy arising from this unkindly state of his later fortunes, will, however, be instantly

supplanted by a much stronger demand on compassion, in the mind of a religious reader, when he comes to the following passage :

“ When the project for erecting a third theatre was vehemently pursued, Cumberland lent it the assistance of his name and talents. Most, if not all, of the addresses, statements, and advertisements which appeared, were by him. He interested himself in the success of the undertaking with great ardour ; and was frequently heard to say that he only wished to live till its completion, when he could resign his last breath without a desire ungratified.”—p. 586.

We never had read Cumberland's poem of “ Calvary,” and this short passage made us determine that we never would. If any thing had been necessary to corroborate the determination, it would have been found in the two pages of vile and vulgar profaneness, which Mr. Mudford has, we think very properly, extracted from a few of Cumberland's plays, in contradiction to Dr. Vincent's assertion, in his funeral oration for Cumberland, that his dramatic writings were of “ strict moral tendency.”

[September, 1812.]

The Martyrs ; or, the Triumph of the Christian Religion. By F. A. DE CHATEAUBRIAND, Author of the *Genie de Christianisme, Atala, &c.* Translated from the French, by W. Joseph Walter, late of St. Edmund's College. *To which is added, an Appendix, consisting of Extracts from his "Itineraire."* 8vo., 2 vols.

THIS romantic Frenchman has been very advantageously introduced among us by means of his Travels in Greece and Palestine ;—if indeed it may be deemed an advantageous introduction of an author, who has written several works and proposes writing more, to become first extensively known by means of that one of his productions which surpasses in interest every thing he has written or is destined to write ; for this, we may think, may be safely affirmed of his Itinerary. When, however, it is recollected that the bold, protracted, and diversified expedition which that work briefly narrates, was undertaken expressly on account of the work at present before us, and prosecuted with a daily and almost hourly reference to it, so unparalleled a circumstance in literary history will be thought sufficient, even alone, to engage a particular attention to the performance. And it will justly excite a very favourable prejudice. For the sparing of labour, both in the preparations for authorship and in the actual operation, is so prevailing and grievous a vice in our present literature, that we are predisposed to revere, as quite a literary saint, the writer who brings along with his work the evidence of having bestowed on it a long and costly labour, especially, if at the same time, he has declined taking the advantage of making his work immoderately large.

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It does not appear whether the intention of travelling to the East in order to acquire accurate and lively images of the scenes in which the supposed events were to be represented as having taken place, was coeval with the first projection of the work; but in the course of prosecuting the adventure, and when the acquisition was made, it was impossible but the interesting pictures which were forming by degrees into a complete enchanting oriental world in the author's imagination, must have grown into so much importance in his account, that the delineation of them in his work would become one of the leading objects in composing it. Still, the plan must have some one object decidedly and substantially predominant. What that is, we should have considerable difficulty in defining, if we were not allowed to avail ourselves of the author's own explanation.

"I advanced in a former work that Christianity appeared to me more favourable than Paganism for the developement of characters, and for a display of the passions; I added, moreover, that the *marvellous* of this religion might contend for the palm of interest with that borrowed from mythology: these opinions, which have been more or less combated, it is my present object to support, and to illustrate by an example.—To render the reader an impartial judge in this great literary process, it was necessary to make choice of a subject that would allow me to throw upon the same canvass the predominant features of the two religions; the morality, the sacrifices, and the ceremonies of both systems of worship: a subject, where the language of Genesis might be blended with that of the Odyssey, and the Jupiter of Homer be placed by the side of the Jehovah of Milton, without giving offence to piety, to taste, or to probability.

"Having once conceived this idea, I had no difficulty in finding an historical epoch where the two religions met in conjunction. The scene opens toward the close of the third century, at the moment when the persecution of the Christians commenced under Diocletian. Christianity had not yet become the predominating religion of the Roman empire, though its altars arose near the shrines of idolatry.

"The persons who make a figure in the work are taken from the two religions. I have in the first place made the reader acquainted with the leading characters, and thence proceeded to describe the state of Christianity through the then known world, as it stood at the time of the action; the remainder of the work develops a particular catastrophe that is connected with the general massacre of the Christians."

Such scheme evidently gave an exceedingly wide scope to a writer extensively acquainted with ancient

history. As the author himself observes, it "placed all antiquity sacred and profane at his disposal;" so far as it should be possible to bring its nations, its personages, and its customs, within the compass of such a fable as might be fairly constructed upon the life and adventures of two or three individuals contemporary with one another at a particular epoch. And the "Travels of Anacharsis," and some other works, had sufficiently shown to what a vast extent and diversity of things a little ingenuity might dilate the circumference of such a fable, without any violent excess of confusion or anachronism.

His personages, he observes, are almost all taken from history; and among them are Diocletian, Maximian, Galerius, Constantius, Constantine, Hierocles, St. Jerome, and St. Augustine. He offers an allowable apology for the anachronism of making Jerome contemporary with Diocletian, and for some other little freedoms taken with chronological truth. And he should rather have apologized for, than pretended to justify, his fancy for exonerating Diocletian from almost all the guilt of the tenth persecution of the Christians. He professes to have conformed very carefully to historical matter of fact in his representation of the manners and ceremonies of the primitive Christians; of the public exhibitions of the Romans; of the persons and manners of the Gauls, Franks, and other barbarians; and of "the geographical curiosities respecting the Gauls, Greece, Syria, and Egypt." He names collectively his authorities; but the readers will wish that in some instances he had yielded to the advice which he says was given him, to subjoin notes, with specific historical references and illustrations.

As the work claims to rank in the Epic class, and therefore professes to give a dignified history of extraordinary transactions, we cannot be excused from attempting a brief abstract of the narrative.

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The pagan virgin, the heroine of the work, is Cymodocé, the daughter of Demodocus, "the last descendant of those families of the Homerides, who formerly

inhabited the island of Chios, and who laid pretensions to a direct descent from Homer." He was made high priest to a temple erected by the Messenians to Homer, and in the exercise of his office lived many years in a sacred retirement, tenderly rearing, and carefully and successfully cultivating Cymodocé, his only child. In this recluse situation, however, she unfortunately attracted the admiration of Hierocles the pro-consul of Achaia, a very powerful but a depraved and odious person, whose demand of her in marriage her father most willingly concurred with her in refusing, though great danger was the too certain consequence. As an expedient conducive to her protection, he consecrates her, in capacity of priestess, to the Muses. Her merit became so conspicuous that she was chosen by the old men to lead the choir of virgins who were appointed to present the votive offerings in a solemn festival of Diana, on the borders of Messenia and Laconia. In returning, on a moonlight night, she loses her way and her female attendant, in a mountain forest. Excessively alarmed, though all was silent except a little stream, she flew to implore the protection of the Naiad of this stream, and found an altar at the foot of a cascade. The reader anticipates that this is not all. "She perceived a youth, who lay reclined in slumber against the rock: his head rested on his left shoulder, and was partly supported by his lance; a ray of the moon, darting through the branches of a cypress, shone full in the huntsman's face. A disciple of Apelles would have thus represented the slumbers of Endymion. Indeed, the daughter of Demodocus really imagined that in this youth she beheld the lover of Diana; in a plaintive zephyr she thought she distinguished the sigh of the goddess, and in a glimmering ray of the moon she seemed to catch a glimpse of her snowy vest as she was just retiring into the thicket." It will instantaneously be apprehended that this is the hero of the piece; and he very soon gives indications of an uncommon and lofty character. Suddenly awaked by the barking of his dog, he intermingles questions and excla-

mations of surprise and admiration with similar expressions uttered by the priestess of the Muses; but soon signifies, with a degree of abruptness and austerity, his disapprobation of her reference to pagan divinities. With kindness, modified by this austerity, he conducts her to the neighbourhood of her father's abode, repeating, in the most decided and laconic terms, his expressions of dissent and censure as often as she introduces, as she naturally does, any of her mythological ideas. A degree of alarm mingled with her surprise and admiration, as her mind, intent on her strange companion, fluctuated among the conjectures of an auspicious deity, a Spartan youth, and an impious demon. Whether it was merely to rid her of all perplexity and apprehension, or whether any slight thought of a remoter possible consequence might have occurred to his mind, does not seem to be clearly known; but he informs her, in a very few words, that he is a plain sinful mortal of the name of Eudorus, the son of Lasthenes. Notwithstanding, when he bade her adieu, with a benignant smile darkening into a solemnity appropriate to his Christian valediction, and suddenly vanished into the wood, "she no longer doubted but this huntsman was one of the immortals." But her father instantly recognizes the name of Lasthenes, "one of the principal inhabitants of Arcadia, a descendant of the race of heroes, and of gods, for he received his origin from the river Alpheus;" and the name of his son Eudorus, "who has borne away laurels of triumph in the field of Mars." And being highly dissatisfied that the friendly stranger had not been introduced to receive his thanks and hospitality, he decides that he ought to make a visit, taking his daughter with him, to the residence of Lasthenes, to express their acknowledgments, and offer as a present a valuable vase of brass, "admirably embossed by the art of Vulcan" with a historical device, and once in the possession of Ajax, and afterwards of Homer.

A splendid superabundance of mythological lore beds the two days' itinerary; and an inconvenient quantity of it is carried by the priest of Homer, even

into the abode of the plain, though opulent, Christian Lasthenes, who welcomed the strangers with the utmost respect and kindness, but surprised them with the unostentatious simplicity of his personal appearance and domestic accommodations. It is evident that Demodocus was not well read in Roman history; for the stories of Cincinnatus and Fabricius would have prevented his being so "confounded" on being shown Eudorus sitting as a plain rustic under a tree in a harvest field; "what," thought he within himself, "is this simple swain the warrior who triumphed over Carrausius, who was tribune of the Britannic legion, and the friend of prince Constantine!"—unless indeed it was the youth of the hero that excited his surprise; but he was not younger, as far as appears, than Scipio Africanus. It could be with no little emotion that two of the persons now brought together, recognized each other; and the inextricable complication of their destinies soon becomes palpably manifest.

The incessant grave introduction by Demodocus, and the frequent one even by his daughter, when she is led into conversation, of the pagan notions and personages, forces a protest, firm and explicit, though most mild in manner on the part of the Christians, against the whole impious vanity of a false religion. Demodocus, proud of his daughter's accomplishments, had somewhat unwittingly persuaded her to a musical effort, in which, for the entertainment of the friendly family, she "chanted the origin of the heavens," and all about Jupiter, and Minerva, and Hebe, and a long series of kindred legends. It was an indispensable civility that Christian music should make some return, and it was the business of Eudorus to teach it what to say. His performance recounted the most prominent facts and principles of the Jewish and Christian religion. The world of topics celebrated in the two descants would incline us to believe that the natural day was much longer in those times than now, and that the human vocal organs were constructed of much stouter materials. The performances led to a variety of amicable remarks from the

Christians; and it appears that Cymodocé had an incomparably greater facility of comprehending, as well as a more favourable disposition for entertaining the new doctrines, than her father, who appears throughout, it must be confessed, a man of very middling faculties, though of much good will. The Christians, however, are not continually reading theological lectures; they rather endeavour to make their religion present itself in the form of practical lessons, arising from domestic incidents, and the solemn rites of their religious worship. There was a bishop on a visit among them, whose intelligence and venerable character contributed to explain and dignify their sacred observances. When some parts of the apostolic epistles were read, he commented with peculiar emphasis on those relating to marriage, and it is stated that the utmost attention and interest were manifested by the auditors.

There was one part of the religious economy of the place kept out of sight; that is, the course of penance which Eudorus is undergoing with exemplary severity and willingness, but nevertheless at the injunction, it is presumed, of his spiritual directors. He wears a shirt of hair cloth, and frequents a lonely grotto, where he contemplates the skull of a martyr, and sprinkles himself with ashes. As his character, so far as known in his native province, had been uniformly and eminently honourable, the venerable bishop, rather perhaps from a wish to be qualified to aid the penitent's discipline, than from mere curiosity, is desirous to hear from himself the story of his eventful life. Eudorus readily complies, and the family, with the two strangers, being convened in a grove, with a great deal of formality, very early in the morning, he enters on a narration which constitutes nearly a third part of the whole work. It is disfigured with the extravagances of Chateaubriand's wild imagination, and some of the irksome puerilities of his Romish faith, but it is notwithstanding a highly interesting story. It relates his departure from Greece in obedience to a decree of the Roman government, that the eldest sons of the family of Philopœmen, from whom he was descended,

“should be sent, as soon as they should attain their sixteenth year, to Rome, to remain as hostages in the hands of the senate;” it unfolds the scenes of adventure and excess in Rome; narrates an active military career, in the army of Constantius, in the warfare with the Franks, with Carrausius, and other barbarian enemies; describes and penitentially confesses some romantic incidents and adventures in his government of the Armorican provinces; and concludes with his sudden renunciation of all forms of public life, and his return by way of Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and Byzantium, to his family in Arcadia. Though violating in numberless instances the rules of good taste, this story displays a great deal of bold invention, and true poetic painting. The magnificence of Rome, with its pagan rites and profligate manners; the religious economy of its Christian inhabitants; the spirited but criminal and unsatisfying course of life of a number of young men of talents, including St. Jerome and St. Augustine, are described with great animation. A still greater vigour of fancy is shown in the camp and battle scenes of the Sicambrian war, and in the representation of gloomy superstition and barbarian attachment and hostility in the story of Velleda, the druidess, who first endangered the government, and then vanquished the rectitude, of the young hero in Gaul. It was by no means necessary, however, to tell this story at full length, in order to account for some portion of the penitential severities imposed on Eudorus by the church and his recovered conscience. The author was very far, we believe, from designing any immoral influence, but he certainly had invention enough to have so contrived his series of adventures throughout, as not even to excite a question (and here it is something more than a question) relative to the moral tendency; so contrived it as not to involve the necessity of a full pause in the hero's recital, to hint to Cymodocé and all the females of his own family the propriety of withdrawing. The writer might easily have comprehended that the tragical fate of the barbarian heroine, and the regrets, the abandonment of public employment, and the hair shirt, of

Eudorus, would be totally unavailing to neutralize the natural influence of a romantic criminal adventure on the greater number of readers, especially when the story is so managed as to offer every imaginable palliation of the delinquency of the favourite. It is not, however, pretended, as one of these palliations, that he was a simple, innocent, and promptly affectionate young man ; for he is made to confess that in Rome, previously to entering the military service, he had taken his full share of the folly and vice of the metropolis, had been excommunicated by the Christian bishop, had been, in short, as much the rival as the associate of the vicious activity of St. Jerome, St. Augustine, and a number more spirited young reprobates—not probably, however, so young as himself, for it is to be recollected that he arrived at Rome at the age of sixteen, and he does not appear to have been there long before he forgot the solemn and affectionate Christian instructions of his mother, and his own sincere respect for the religion in which he had been so carefully educated. The authority, indeed, of that religion over his mind was very much relaxed by the effect of the splendours of the Roman magnificence on his ardent imagination even before his passions were captivated by vice ; and we think the manner in which such a cause might operate on such a mind is well displayed in the following passage.

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The captivations of Naples are described as of a more soft and exquisite quality. And on the whole, though both his own mind and those of his companions are represented as oppressed and corroded with an incurable dissatisfaction with themselves and all their felicities, there yet appears to have been very little chance but our hero would have sunk to the bottom of Italian paganism and profligacy, if a sudden mandate of displeasure, from imperial authority, had not ordered him off to the camp of Constantius on the Rhine.

Notwithstanding all this, the author is so gratified by the many noble and magnanimous qualities which undeniably manifest themselves in Eudorus, and so concili-

liated by the zeal and severity of his penitence, that he is perfectly willing to have given him, if so it might have been, the tender and immaculate young Messenian. So were the parents and the whole friendly party, but for the obstacle arising from the contrariety of religions. And so was she : and had soon made progress in a very hopeful course for removing this difficulty ; for the lights of the new religion were beginning to confuse and dim her Homeric theology. But while so many things seem conspiring to complete an union which, even in spite of the less honourable part of the hero's history, the reader is become disposed to sanction, it is unequivocally intimated that another destiny awaits them.

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By this time the aged and declining Diocletian, who is foolishly represented as a sort of protector of the Christians, is on the point of surrendering his imperial power into the hands of their savage enemy Galerius, whose malice against them is stimulated to still more infernal fury, if possible, by the atheistical sophist, his minister Hierocles. In the exultation for having obtained, and in the eagerness to carry into effect, the first edicts of persecution, this detestable favourite hastens to his provisional government in Greece, equally intent on tormenting the Christians and requiring the daughter of Demodocus. At the same time Eudorus receives from the rising prince Constantine an urgent demand of his presence in Rome, to aid the endeavours to restrain the progress of persecution. After a number of interesting scenes of affection, and some formidable proceedings of Hierocles, it is determined that the two friends shall be betrothed, and then go on board two ships ; Eudorus for Rome, and Cymodocé, accompanied by a brave and faithful Roman officer, for the Holy Land, to put herself under the protection and instructions of Constantine's mother, Helena, then residing at Jerusalem. All this is accomplished, and a number of striking scenes and incidents are exhibited in the narration.

At Rome the great crisis is arrived ; and the Christians, in their solemn secret council, are directed by

preternatural indications to choose Eudorus, though still a penitent not fully restored to the communion of the church, as their advocate in an approaching great assembly, in which the emperors, previously to enacting the last severities against the Christians, were to grant them the privilege of "showing cause" against the intended measures. The speakers on this great occasion are Symmachus, the high priest of Jupiter, who tempers his faithful zeal for the gods with a dissuasive from persecution; Hierocles, who, however, displays much less of the sophist than of the rancorous and impudent calumniator; and the young hero and penitent, who certainly won the palm of eloquence, and had nearly decided the mind and decree of Diocletian. But the favourable sentiment was overruled by the detestable machinations of Galerius and Hierocles, and, after a day or two of dreadful suspense to the Christians, he issued the sanguinary decree, and immediately abdicated the throne.

From this melancholy period to the close of the history, the work consists of a crowded succession of pictures representing the miseries inflicted on the Christians; the devout and heroic resignation with which they prepared for them, and encountered them; the still more grievous sufferings which Providence inflicted on the leading persecutors, or made them inflict on themselves; and the adventures and perils of Demodocus and his daughter, who both, though unknown to each other and to Eudorus, arrived at Rome during this season of crimes and woes. The priest of Homer had not been able to endure life without his beloved child, and had seized the first conveyance to Italy. Cymodocée had been driven by the vigilant and ferocious agents of Hierocles to make a sudden and very narrow escape from Jerusalem. She was again conducted by her intrepid and generous friend Dorotheus; was baptized in the wilderness by St. Jerome, who had now quitted the splendid vanities of Rome for the hut of an anchorite; and had found means finally to reach the metropolis of the world, and the locality of its greatest wickedness.

Here, for a moment, she is thrown very nearly into the grasp of Hierocles, but is rescued by a tumult of the people excited by her father, who most opportunely discovers her at the moment of her danger, but falls into utter distraction at instantly losing her again, in consequence of her public avowal that she is a Christian, which is rewarded by her being ignominiously led to prison amidst the insults of that very rabble which, but an hour before, had been on the point of demolishing the minister's palace for her sake.

Eudorus had become the most obnoxious of the Christians, and was summoned to the alternative of the idol worship or the torture, with prolonged and earnest exhortations and entreaties, however, from the judge, who respected his military renown, to save himself by a slight compliance. His final inflexibility provoked the torture, and sustained it with unalterable firmness. He was conveyed back to his imprisoned Christian friends in a lacerated and languid state, but with a mind sustained to the highest point of resolution and divine complacency; and was received by them in their gloomy abode with a mixture of mourning and exultation, in which the latter sentiment, however, was greatly predominant. They surround him with acts of devotion and compassion, and join in an animated song of praise to Him for whom they are all equally resolved to die in any manner his enemies may choose—those proud enemies, whose utmost power reaches only a few feet above the surface of this earth. One last and strongest temptation awaits Eudorus: a deceptive account is sent him, that Cymodocé has been consigned to a place of infamy in Rome, and is there doomed to receive Hierocles, and this is accompanied by a solemn assurance, that a very slight idolatrous compliance on his part should be followed by her instant restoration to him, and their happy union. The horror and hope excited by this message shook his resolution; the soldiers who had formerly fought under him, together with some of the people, fell at his knees to conjure him; he actually took the cup to make the required libation, but was recalled to himself by the

shriek of his pious fellow-sufferers, and threw it down, exclaiming with triumph, "I am a Christian." He is soon informed of the real situation of Cymodocé, and of the indiscriminate doom of all the imprisoned Christians, without further trial, to perish by wild beasts in the amphitheatre of Vespasian, on the following day, the birth-day of the emperor Galerius, who, though dying himself of a frightful disease, was resolved to beguile his sufferings, on the very last day that he had any hope to be able to leave his apartment, by the luxury of witnessing the death of his best subjects. In the evening Cymodocé receives the appropriate dress of a destined victim, and her mistaking it for the nuptial attire, in consequence of a rumour that had been reported to her, renders her lonely prison scene (for all her Christian associates had already suffered) doubly interesting. In the night the brave Dorotheus, himself a Christian, and attended by some others, under the disguise of soldiers, contrives to introduce himself, as by order of the emperor, into her prison, and while the keeper is stupified by the "wine of the gods," bears her off to a retired residence, where she is received by her father. She at first refused to escape from the prison, on being informed of the nature of the dress she had on, and of the doom of the imprisoned Christians, including Eudorus; and she yielded only at the representation of the nearness and the wretchedness of her father, and the firm declaration of Dorotheus and his companions, that if she would not go they would stay and share her fate—a fate to which they had not as yet become directly exposed. But she secretly retained her purpose; and, after a tender and afflictive interview with her father, who sunk at length, in consequence of her earnest request to heaven, into a profound repose, she went forth in quest of the fatal amphitheatre, and at length found it by means of a motley crowd of intoxicated and barbarous pagans, who were proceeding thither, and who reviled her, as a Christian and a victim, as she went along with them. On the opening of one of the gates, she beholds Eudorus already, and alone, in the arena: she darts in, and is

instantly in his arms; and the final scene, presenting in vivid colours the horror, tenderness, and magnanimity of Eudorus—the relentless and impatient barbarity of the spectators—the entrance of the emperor—the immediate signs of the commencement of the sanguinary transaction—the unclosing of a tiger's den—and the speedy death of the victims, held in each other's embrace—closes with the catastrophe, which terminates also the work :

“These martyred spouses had scarcely received the palm of victory, when a cross of resplendent light appeared in the air, like that hallowed banner which led the victorious Constantine to the scene of triumph ; the thunder rolled along the Vatican, which was then a hill, all lonely and deserted, but which was frequently visited by an unknown spirit ; the amphitheatre was shaken to its foundations ; all the statues of the idols fell to the earth ; and a voice like that which was formerly heard in Jerusalem, exclaimed, ‘The gods have gone out of thee !’”

We have now no room for any of the various passages we had marked for quotation ; and a few concluding observations shall be limited to as short a space as possible.

The author's avowed design was to show, in an illustration by examples, that “Christianity is more favourable than paganism for the development of characters, and for a display of the passions ;” and, also, “that the *marvellous* of this religion might contend for the palm of interest with that borrowed from mythology.” So far as this is an intelligible object, the obvious question, on a whole view of the work, would be, whether he has accomplished it ? But how “more favourable ?” If he meant that Christianity can supply a more *attractive* display of the progress of human character, and a more amiable display of the passions, we cannot understand how it was worth while to prove such a proposition. If he meant to say that, as mere matter of moral painting, the progress of a pagan's character, the influence of paganism of any given kind in forming it, and the quality of the passions as acting under that influence, are less capable of being strongly delineated, and less capable of forming a curious and striking ex-

hibition, the proposition is surely erroneous. Our author might himself have marked as discriminatively the progress, and displayed as boldly the hideous maturity, of the character of Galerius, as of that of Eudorus.

The competition of the opposed religions in point of the *marvellous* should be a matter of more easy apprehension; but there is perplexity even here also. For what *is* the marvellous on each side? How much more is it to comprise, on the pagan side, than what is *real*,—the splendid structures, the lavished treasures of all the arts, the magnificent processions and rites, and the games, generous or barbarous, of Greece and Rome; and the gloomy forest recesses, the horrid midnight sacrifices, and the fierce enthusiasm, of the superstitions of Gaul and Germany? Is it, in addition to these realities, to include the whole mythology of these nations, when it comes to this proposed competition with Christianity? On the other hand, with *what* marvellous is Christianity to come into the contest? In the first place, perhaps, some of the circumstances of its worship in the times of persecution, as, for instance, the assembling in the catacombs, a historical fact of which our author has availed himself to excellent purpose; next the scenes of heroic joy in the expectation of martyrdom; in the social preparation for it, and in the actual suffering; and, in addition to these, the remarkable providences, such as surprising preservations, sudden conversion, and zealous co-operation of recent enemies, and the dreadful fates of persecuting tyrants. But is the Christian marvellous to include also such miraculous powers as those of the first age, and not only such things of this nature as are well attested in the Christian history, but also every sort of prodigy that the wild imagination of a poet may be willing to indulge itself in inventing? In our author's hands Christianity is amply supplied with this last requisite for the proposed contest; for he has introduced some of the most foolish extravagances that ever popish fancy mistook for grandeur. There is a silly and monstrous story of Paul the hermit, and his tame lion, and his prophetic inspirations. There

is another about the Virgin Mary making a progress through purgatory. There are ill-managed tales of the intervention of angels. And even the Almighty is brought in view as an interlocutor with some of the celestial personages; a presumption rewarded with deserved failure in Milton, a pure irreligious folly in any succeeding poet. M. Chateaubriand is utterly unfit, as an *author*, for the invisible world; he there instantly loses the whole of that portion of reason which is barely enough, hardly enough, to regulate his movements on the real world of land and water; for even in his mere mortal scenes of action and passion, there is too often a sickening excess. Every thing is to be sentimental, or eloquent, or tragical. And not seldom he is all this, even in a high degree; but what is he to do in the intervals, as he has no faculty for any sort of reasoning? —he must resolutely endeavour to be still pathetic and still eloquent.

His grand talent, as we have had occasion, in a former instance, to observe, is that of painting; and in this he really does very eminently excel. The fair, the sublime, and the tremendous scenes and phenomena of nature; the actual forms of the monumental remains of human magnificence; dreadful situations and transactions of human beings, and the exterior exhibitions of all the passions, are comprised within the sphere over which he has a despotic command. There is too a pensiveness of feeling and reflection, which is very pleasing when it is quite clear of extravagance.

His Roman Catholic faith has an unfortunate effect on many parts of the work, which it despoils of all dignity, by glaring out in so many puerile extravagances. It destroys also, by a number of superstitious rites and ceremonies, the simplicity of primitive Christianity. While displaying the pagan persecutions, we should be glad to know what our author thought of the history of the *ecclesiastical* Rome, its pontiffs, its holy office, and its countless myriads of Christian victims.

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[December, 1812.]

Memoirs of the Life and Character of the late Rev. George Whitefield, A.M., of Pembroke College, Oxford; and Chaplain to the Right Hon. the Countess of Huntingdon. Faithfully selected from his original Papers, Journals, and Letters; illustrated by a variety of interesting Anecdotes, from the best Authorities. Originally compiled by the late Rev. JOHN GILLIES, D.D., Minister of the College Church of Glasgow. Second edition, revised and corrected, with large additions and improvements, by AARON C. SEYMOUR, Author of "*Letters to Young Persons.*" 8vo.

ONE of the many things we have vainly wished, is a life of Whitefield written by a philosophical Christian; —a work which should, with the utmost coolness and accuracy, discriminate and describe the powers and adaptations of the man, as an agent, attempting at the same time some comparison between them and those of other men, of the common or the extraordinary order; which should illustrate the relation between those powers, and the effects undeniably resulting from their exertion; and should fairly estimate whatever circumstances of the times might create a predisposition, if we may so express it, to receive the operation of those powers with a peculiar and perhaps disproportionate force. There certainly appears something considerably of the nature of what we account prodigy, in the history of this preacher. With the doubtful exception of Wicliff, no man probably ever excited in this island, so profound, and extended, and prolonged a sensation in the public mind, by personal addresses to the understanding and conscience, on the subject of religion, unaided by any weight of a great compacted party, any subsidiary league and machinery of powerful talents, or any imposing patronage of rank and wealth. We do not mention Knox as an exception, because the force of his in-

fluence, though mainly proceeding (so far as human causes were concerned) from the mighty energy of his own mind, was yet not so merely personal and single a force, as in the case of the modern preacher. This man—the son of an inn-keeper—without fortune or connexions—of very moderate attainments—trained in the ordinary manner of a humble youth sent to college—without any preconceived plan—without having carefully furnished himself with auxiliaries—without any strong fancy of his own importance—without seizing on any striking public occasion—in a period and country of settled order, and of so much knowledge and civilization, as would, in ordinary speculation, be accounted sufficient to secure the community against any very violent effect of novelty and enthusiasm;—under all these circumstances this plain undesigning young man came forth; and by mere addresses, from pulpits, from tables, from walls, from steps, excited, and through his whole life continued to extend, such a commotion in the public mind, that, if a list could be made from the experience of all nations and ages, of the twenty men that have produced the greatest effects, by means of their single personal influence, it is highly probable that the name of Whitefield must there hold a place.

If it were possible that any sensible foreigner could be perfectly unacquainted with the history, and should hear the case stated thus far, he would naturally say: “But at least the man in question must have possessed talents absolutely prodigious, almost miraculous.” Where then would he be in his speculations, when the *writings* of Whitefield were put in his hands? when he read many of the identical sentences, which had overwhelmed with terror, or melted in tenderness, vast and heterogeneous assemblages of a people, by no means nationally distinguished, in either its southern or northern division, for facility of feeling.

It is clear fact, admitting of no manner of question, that Whitefield’s writing, nay, that those specimens of his public addresses which were written down during their powerful delivery, bear but exceedingly slender

marks of any thing we are accustomed to denominate talent, in the intellectual sense. His reasoning is no more than just a common propriety in putting thoughts generally common together. His devotional sentiment is fervent, but not of elevated conception. His figures, as far as we recollect, are seldom new, or what critics mean when they speak of "felicity;" their analogy is the broad and obvious one, such as that between medicine and the gospel, considered as a remedial dispensation. The diction is quite plain, and does not appear to partake of eloquence, further than an easy freedom, and the genuine expression of sincerity and earnestness. The collection of letters, constituting about one half of his printed works, must have exceedingly disappointed those who sought from them any other instruction, than that which may be imparted by one general emanation of pious zeal, undistinguished by any discriminative particularity of thought, or any but the most obvious kind of reflections, often repeated, and in the same words, on the successive incidents and scenes of his life and labours. There are none of those pointed observations, either on human nature or individual character, which might have been suggested by the masses and the particles of the human kind so variously brought under his view, and which would have been made by such a sagacious man, for instance, as John Knox. And even the disclosures of the movements and principles of his own mind, on which subject there is no appearance of reserve, are, with a singular uniformity, for a man stimulated by the circumstances of so extraordinary a career, in the strain of pious common-place. The reader's interest would soon subside in an irresistible sense of insipidity, but for the strong and constant indications of a genuine religious zeal, and the train of references proving an unremitted and most wonderful course of exertions. In short, there can be no hazard in asserting, that his collective writings would, in the minds of all cultivated and impartial readers, leave the *marvellous* of his successes to be accounted for on the ground of causes quite distinct from talent, in the intellectual sense of the term.

And it is remarkable how decidedly, though tacitly, the opinion of the religious public has been manifested on this point ; for there has probably never been another instance of the writings of a man of pre-eminent excellence, utility, and celebrity, so soon and generally ceasing to hold a place among popular books. So far as we are apprised, Whitefield's sermons are very rarely reprinted, or quoted, or recollected ; and if not his sermons, of course not the rest of his writings.

It would be, then, a very interesting inquiry, What were precisely the causes of that prodigious and most happy effect, which accompanied the ministrations of a man, who was one of the three or four most powerful and useful preachers since the apostolic age ;—what, we mean, were the causes *exclusively* of an extraordinary agency of divine power—those *human* causes, which are adapted to produce a great and a calculable effect, according to the general laws of the human constitution ? It would be quite proper to take the question, in the first instance, on this limited ground ; inquiring how far Whitefield's qualifications were of a nature to produce a great effect on men, with respect to *other* interesting concerns to which the exercise of those qualifications was applicable, and in which the results of that exercise might be considered as the proportionate and ordinary effects of the human cause.

It is not with the slightest view of attempting any such disquisition that we have suggested it. We began with the intention of proceeding very few words further, than the expression of a wish that a philosopher had written a life of Whitefield, on the plan of instituting and determining such an inquiry. Such a biographer finding, we presume, as a philosopher, a vast proportion of effect beyond what could be explained by the talents of the agent, taken at their highest possible estimate, and combined with all that could be deemed favourable in the circumstances of the times, would, *as a Christian*, assign, as the paramount cause, the intervention of an extraordinary influence from heaven, giving an efficacy to the operation of the human agent, incomparably be-

yond any natural power of its faculties and exertions. And indeed what would the judgment of that man be worth, who even viewing the case *merely as a philosopher*, should fail or refuse to recognize a divine agency in the change of a multitude of profane and wicked men, into religious and virtuous ones, by means so simple as Whitefield's plain addresses to their dull or perverted understandings, their insensible consciences, and their depraved passions? A man who professes to philosophize on human nature, ought to have *some* way of accounting for such facts, when brought before him on competent evidence, and in great numbers. And what a laudable philosophy it would be, that should find such facts to be quite according to the general principles, and the ordinary course of human nature! or, acknowledging them not to be so, should either carelessly attribute them to chance, or should virtually revive, for a new and higher application, the old notion of occult qualities! As if the cast off rags and broken implements of antiquated physics, were quite good enough for the service of the philosophy of mind, morals, and religion.

These slight remarks are made with any other purpose in the world, than that of depreciating the endowments of Whitefield. While regarding his powers, strictly intellectual, as all discerning readers of his writings must do, as very moderate; and while holding, as also all those who coincide with Whitefield in religious faith hold, that an energy indefinitely superior to that of any or all the powers he exerted, was evinced in the success which attended him; we have all the admiration which it can seem little better than idly gratuitous to profess, of those extraordinary qualifications which he displayed in the sacred cause—qualifications which were adapted, even according to the common principles of human nature, to excite a very great sensation. According to the testimony of all his hearers that have left memorials of him, or that still survive to describe him, he had an energy and happy combination of the passions, so very extraordinary as to constitute a commanding

species of sublimity of character. In their swell, their fluctuations, their very turbulence, these passions so faithfully followed the nature of the subject, and with such irresistible evidence of being utterly clear of all design of oratorical management, that they bore all the dignity of the subject along with them, and never appeared, in their most ungovernable emotions, either extravagant or ludicrous to any but minds of the coldest or profanest order. They never, like the violent ebullitions of mere temperament, confounded his ideas, but on the contrary, had the effect of giving those ideas a distinct and matchlessly vivid enunciation : insomuch that ignorant and half-barbarous men often seemed, in a way which amazed even themselves, to understand Christian truths on their first delivery. Some of them might have heard, and they had heard as unmeaning sounds, similar ideas expressed in the church service ; but in Whitefield's preaching they seemed to strike on their minds in fire and light. His delivery, if that could be spoken of as a thing distinguishable from that energy which inflamed his whole being, was confessedly oratorical in the highest degree of the highest sense of the term. It varied through all the feelings, and gave the most natural and emphatic expression of them all. He had, besides, great presence of mind in preaching, and the utmost aptitude to take advantage of attending circumstances, and even the incidents of the moment.

His display of unparalleled energy was uniformly accompanied by irresistible evidence—in the perfectly artificial character of his signs of passion—in the exhausting frequency and interminable prosecution of his labours—in the courage and hazard in which some of them were ventured on—in the complete renunciation, which such a course plainly involved, of all views of emolument and preferment—and in his forbearance to attempt, to any material extent, any thing like an organized sectarian system of co-operation,—*irresistible* evidence, that his unceasing exertion, that his persuasions, his expostulations, his vehemence, his very indignation,

were all inspired by a perfectly genuine and unquenchable zeal for the Christian cause, and the eternal welfare of men : And our unhappy nature is yet not so *totally* perverse, but that this will always make a great impression on the multitude.

Again, it was, by the constitution of human nature, a great luxury, in spite of the pain, to have the mind so roused and stimulated, the passions so agitated. For the sake of this, even religion, evangelical religion, would be endured for a little while ; and great numbers, who were inveigled by this mere love of strong excitement to endure religion a little while, were happily so effectually caught, that they could never afterwards endure life without religion.

According to all testimony, the ministry of the national church was at that time generally such, as to give, with respect, at least, to the excitement of attention, a ten-fold effect to the preaching of Whitefield. It was such a contrast as could not but contribute to magnify him into a stupendous prodigy. He might be called, by the ministers of this very church, a fanatic, a madman, or a deceiver ; he might be proclaimed and proscribed under all terms and forms of opprobrium or execration ; but, the while, it was perfectly inevitable, that " all the world would wonder after the beast."

As there is little hope of obtaining a philosophical biography for Whitefield, we must be content with a simple detail of facts, given in a language remote from the secular style of history, and therefore much adapted to baffle the reader in any attempt to compare, and to find the proportions between such facts, as those of Whitefield's life and the events and transactions of the general world. It is nevertheless a very interesting book that is here reprinted, with additions of which we have not the immediate means of ascertaining the extent. It is such a record as no pious man can peruse, without some earnest wishes to be better disposed and better qualified to serve the great cause, which this apostolic man had so much delight and success in promoting ; and as no thoughtful man can peruse, without being led into

deep reflections on the phenomena of that agency, by which the Governor of the world influences the spiritual condition of mankind. *How* the grand effects here displayed could be produced, will be a problem far beyond the science of an infidel speculatist, and, we think, a little beyond that of some declared believers, who make high claims on the ground of a peculiar rationality in their Christianity.

It would be quite out of place to attempt any abstract of this memoir. It brings him very speedily into full and extraordinary action, and briefly marks the most prominent particulars of a career, which permitted him hardly a day of what could, in the common sense of words, be called repose, till he found it in the grave, at the age of fifty-six, in the year 1770. The wonder, the extreme wonder is, that he did not sink into that repose at a much earlier period. The reader of this volume must maintain in his mind a watchful horror of fanaticism, and be very stoutly set against admitting any thing approaching the supernatural, in any part of the modern dispensations of Providence, if he can repel all suspicion, not only that this man's labours were attended, but that his very life was prolonged, by a specifically extraordinary intervention. We repeatedly find him, during a state of languor which sometimes sunk quite down to illness, prosecuting such a course of exertions as would have been enough to reduce most strong men soon to that condition; for example, preaching, in his ardent and exhausting manner, to vast auditories, several times each day, a number of days successively, when his debility was such that he could not, without much help, mount his horse to go to the appointed places. Indeed, it is perhaps only by taking into view the fact, that he was actually preserved from what appeared the probable consequences of some of his exertions, that we can excuse the force put on languishing nature in those exertions,—as in the following instance:

“After a tedious passage of eleven weeks, Mr. Whitefield arrived at New York. Colonel Pepperel went with some friends in his own boat to invite him to his house, but he declined the invitation, being so ill of

a nervous cholic that he was obliged, immediately after his arrival, to go to bed. His friends expressed much anxiety on his behalf. An eminent physician attended him, who had been a deist, but was awakened the last time he was in New England. For some time he was indeed very weak; 'yet,' he writes, 'in these three weeks I was enabled to preach; but, imprudently going over the ferry to Portsmouth, I caught cold, immediately relapsed, and was taken, as every one thought, with death, in my dear friend Mr. Sherborne's house. What gave me most concern was, that notice had been given of my being to preach. Whilst the doctor was preparing a medicine, feeling my pains abated, I on a sudden cried, 'Doctor, my pains are suspended: by the help of God I will go and preach, and then come home and die.' In my own apprehension, and in all appearance to others, I was a dying man. I preached, the people heard me as such. The invisible realities of another world lay open to my view. Expecting to stretch into eternity, and to be with my Master before the morning, I spoke with peculiar energy. Such effects followed the word, I thought it were worth dying for a thousand times. Though wonderfully comforted within, at my return home I thought I was dying indeed. I was laid on a bed upon the ground near the fire, and I heard my friends say, 'he is gone.' But God was pleased to order it otherwise. I gradually recovered; and soon after a poor negro woman would see me. She came, sat down upon the ground, and looked earnestly in my face, and then said, in broken language, 'Massa, you just go to heaven's gate. But Jesus Christ said, get you down, get you down, you must not come here yet; but go first and call some more poor negroes.' I prayed to the Lord that if I was to live, this might be the event."—p. 71.

His mind held such a predominance over his body, and the passion for preaching, and the passions to which preaching gave exercise, were so predominant in his mind, that the employment had on him the effect of a species of enchantment. When so oppressed with lassitude and indisposition, as to perform with uneasiness the most ordinary actions, if he could but sustain just exertion enough to enter on preaching, he quickly became even physically strong and animated. Standing in the pulpit, or any thing provided for the same use, had on him the same effect that Antæus derived from being extended a moment on the ground. The languor, of course, returned on him with double oppressiveness after the conclusion; and the man whose powers of voice and action had appeared to evince an extraordinary vigour of frame, would be found, half an hour afterwards, extended on two or three chairs, almost helpless and fainting. With all the advantage of such a power of voice, as

perhaps no other man possessed, there must still often have been a necessity for forcing it to the last possibility of exertion, in order to his being heard by congregations, very frequently amounting to many thousands, to ten or twelve, and in some instances to twenty, or even more. It is said that the bulk of even these largest multitudes could hear him very distinctly.

It is remarkable in the course of this narrative, that the lower order of the people, even the then barbarian colliers of Kingswood, and the formidable rabble of Moorfields, and Kennington Common, gained themselves a credit, far beyond many of their betters, for decorum, for candour, and even complaisance, towards Whitefield. Could the gentlemen officers, who laid and executed a plan of violent personal outrage against him, even in his bed at Plymouth, have fallen, *flagrante delicto*, into the hands of one of these rabbles, they would have been sure to have received such an exemplary castigation, for his sake, as would at least have left conspicuous marks upon them for life; but they were secure enough of impunity, so long as there was nothing to take account of them, but the police of the country.

It is also very striking to observe the indications of the state of the religious establishment at that time, in the rapidly extended, and soon almost general precaution, of shutting the churches against this orthodox, and devout, and most eloquent preacher. A man who resolutely would, in spite of the church, recollect its Articles, to which he had solemnly declared his assent, and pledged his adherence, and who would obstinately carry the spirit of the liturgy into the sermon, was soon given to understand that a tombstone, a wall, a table, or even the tub of the conventicle, was good enough for him and his notions. The speedy ruin of the church was inevitable, if its ministers and people should be seduced from the systematic employment of exploding its foundation. For though envy and indignation at Whitefield's surpassing popularity, may well be supposed to have had a considerable share in the hostility against him, yet it is beyond all doubt, that it was his most zealous promulgation of

the standard doctrines of the church, combined with the warning and alarming spirit of his ministrations, that chiefly rendered him so obnoxious to the main body of the ministers of that very church.

As the writer of these memoirs admits that this eminent man had his defects, they should have been freely and accurately particularized ; and a large quantity of indifferent funeral oratory, toiling through the common places of panegyric, might as well have been suffered to remain in the respective sermons in which it was originally displayed.

The most obvious fault, or weakness, perhaps, apparent in this exhibition of the character of the great and apostolic minister, was a certain degree of enthusiastic credulity, that was too much disposed to regard the *whole* of the effects temporarily produced by his ministry, as important and effectual operations of evangelical truth.

Had we not already occupied too much space, we should have been inclined to transcribe a minute and very interesting account of his last hours, written by a person who attended him. He preached on the Saturday, and died, of a fit of the asthma, early on the Sunday morning.

[February and April, 1813.]

Junius: including Letters of the same Writer under other Signatures, (now first collected.) To which are added, his confidential correspondence with Mr. Wilkes, and his Private Letters addressed to Mr. H. S. Woodfall. With a Preliminary Essay, Notes, Fac-similies, &c. 8vo.

ANY general observations, that might be not impertinently made on the writings of Junius, will more properly follow than precede a somewhat particular and extended notice of this edition, the announcement of which will have strongly excited the curiosity of many of our readers. And it is a signal testimony to the eminence of the powers displayed in these letters, that, at the distance of nearly half a century from their first coming forth—that after a great number of subsequent political censors had each had his share of attention, and perhaps admiration, and are now in a great measure forgotten—and that in times like the present, superabounding with strange events, and flagrant examples of political depravity of their own,—they should still hold such a place in public estimation, that the appearance of an edition enlarged and illustrated from the store of materials left by the original publisher, will be regarded as an interesting event in the course of our literature. An interest that has thus continued to subsist in vigour after the loss of all temporary stimulants, and that is capable of so lively an excitement, at this distant period, by a circumstance tending to make us a little better acquainted with the author's character, and to put us in more complete possession of his writings, gives assurance that this memorable work may maintain its fame to an indefinite period, and will go down with that portion of our literature, which, in the language of pride and poetry, we call immortal. All will now agree in opinion with the present editor, that it was not vanity in the

writer himself to avow a confidence of being read by a remote generation, avoiding however, to assign, as the strongest foundation of that confidence, his superlative execution; but assuredly this claim to perpetuity was not far from his thoughts, when he mentioned only the principles of his work as the ground of his expectation. "When kings and ministers," he said, "are forgotten, when the force and direction of personal satire is no longer understood, and when measures are felt only in their remotest consequences, this book, will, I believe, be found to contain principles worthy to be transmitted to posterity."

The letters published with the signature of Junius constitute very considerably less than half of the present work. It begins with a Preliminary Essay, of 160 pages; next are Private Letters to the late Mr. H. S. Woodfall, the publisher of the Public Advertiser, extending through nearly one hundred pages; and these are followed by a Private Correspondence between Junius and Mr. Wilkes, occupying full seventy pages. Then come the well known Letters, reaching to within sixty or seventy pages of the end of the second volume. This last portion of the second volume, and the whole of the third are occupied by "Miscellaneous Letters of Junius," which appeared under various signatures, chiefly in the Public Advertiser, before and during the appearance of those of Junius, and most of them verified by internal or circumstantial evidence to be by the same hand. Thus the publication assumes the merit of being, as far as there are any means or chance of accomplishing, a recovery and collection of the entire printed works of the author of Junius's Letters, and challenges the grateful favour of the public, for a service of so much more interesting a kind than it can often happen to a private individual to have the power of conferring.

Every reader will eagerly fall upon the Preliminary Essay. And doubtless it will afford much to gratify all its readers,—but will not be quite satisfactory to any one of them. It is much more valuable than the endeavours of former writers on the same subject; and sup-

plies information which probably no other person than the editor had the means of communicating; but it leaves us surmising and complaining that he has not communicated all he must possess. He tempts us to suspect that he is quite willing to keep the shrine of this mysterious object of idolatry in a measure of its darkness, that he may himself look the larger by standing a little way within the shade. In pursuing the inquiry, Who was Junius? there appears a sort of affectation of arguing the question on the ground only of public evidence or general probabilities, in one or two instances where we cannot help flattering him, (and he doubtless wishes to be so flattered) by something near a belief that, in consequence of information received from his father, he could have adduced, if he had pleased, the more direct evidence of authority.

The Essay begins with some notice of that state of political affairs in the time of Junius which required such a writer, and justified his severity. Those times are briefly contrasted, in a political view, with the present. And this contrast gives a curious example of the benefit derived from the study and admiration of Junius. For it represents that the English Constitution (meaning, as far as we can comprehend, *that* Constitution of which it is of the very essence, according to all the old books, that there should be a real uncorruptly elected representation of the people) was at that time in extreme peril, and is at this time in triumphant security! With a mighty burst of grand-sounding words, (which will remind no one, we hope, of the din and the clang made by the Brahmins round the pile of a perishing victim,) this constitution is put in rivalry "with the pyramids of Egypt." How much is it to be deplored that Junius could not have lived and retained all his powers to this happy time, to show us what those powers, so sovereign in the exposure of wickedness, and the prophecy of calamity, could perform in the way of eulogy and congratulation.

Some pages are employed in observations on the prominent distinctions of the celebrated letters; in acknowledging and excusing the excessive acrimony,

the appearance of personal enmity, too visible in some parts of them ; in describing the alarm and dismay they created among public offenders, up to the very highest order ; and in asserting their beneficial operation, even to the present times, by the effect they had in determining some important questions respecting popular rights, especially the right of juries to consider the question of law as well as of fact. Then comes the inquiry which, even at this distance of time, retains so much of its interest, Who was Junius ? And it is curious to observe, how populous would be the national Pantheon if all those who fancy themselves to be acquainted with individuals of super-eminent talents, might be allowed to place in the assembly their respective idols. For we have here a list of no less than thirteen contemporaries, each of whom has been believed, by many persons or by few, to be no other and no less than Junius. And this list does not include either Horne Tooke or Lord Chatham, to each of whom, however absurdly in the case of the former at least, some slight degree of suspicion has transiently attached. In the editor's opinion, all question relative to Lord Chatham would inevitably be set aside by the severe hostility manifested against that statesman, about the time of his obtaining a pension and title, in several letters signed Poplicola and Anti-Sejanus, sent to the Public Advertiser more than a year before the commencement of the series signed Junius, and which letters the editor inserts with a confident affirmation of their being by the same writer, and of their being the first received from him,—an affirmation made in such terms that we conclude Mr. Woodfall is warranted by more direct evidence than that afforded by the style and spirit of the letters. He might, however, just as well have said so. Any surmise of Lord Chatham's being the writer, would be repressed also by the expressions of dislike to him in one of Junius's private communications to the printer, and by the slow and suspicious manner in which Junius suffered his lordship to grow considerably into his favour during the course of his letters.

The following are the names of the persons for whom pretensions have been made, and several of whom, it seems, would have been meanly gratified by their being admitted: Mr. Charles Lloyd, Mr. John Roberts, Mr. Samuel Dyer, Mr. Burke, Mr. W. G. Hamilton, commonly called Single-Speech, Dr. Butler, Bishop of Hereford, Rev. Philip Rosenhagen, General Lee, Mr. Wilkes, Mr. Hugh Boyd, Mr. Dunning, afterwards Lord Ashburton, Mr. Flood, and Lord George Sackville. And the whole of the list appears to be included without ceremony in this sweeping sentence of the editor.

"While he does not undertake to communicate the real name of Junius, he pledges himself to prove, from incontrovertible evidence, afforded by the private letters of Junius himself during the period in question, in connexion with other documents, that not one of these pretenders has ever had the smallest right to the distinction which some of them have ardently coveted." But this is very carelessly expressed; for there is one of the persons whose claims he has by no means invalidated, and evidently does not think he has: indeed he himself says "the evidence is indecisive."

A numerous series of notices and hints which he justly describes as "desultory," and which he plainly affirms to contain "the whole that the writer has been able to collect concerning the author of the Letters," authorizes, he thinks, the rejection of every claimant that does not answer to the following description.

"From the observations contained in this essay, it should seem to follow unquestionably that the author of the Letters of Junius was an Englishman of highly cultivated education, deeply versed in the language, the laws, the constitution, and history of his native country; that he was a man of easy, if not affluent circumstances, of unsullied honour and generosity, who had it equally in his heart and in his power to contribute to the necessities of other persons, and especially of those who were exposed to troubles on his account: that he was in habits of confidential intercourse, if not with different members of the cabinet, with politicians who were most intimately familiar with the court, and entrusted with all its secrets: that he had attained an age which would allow him, without vanity, to boast of an ample knowledge and experience of the world: that during the years 1767, 1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, and part of 1772, he resided almost constantly in London or its vicinity, devoting a very

large portion of his time to political concerns, and publishing his political lucubrations, under different signatures, in the *Public Advertiser*; that in his natural temper he was quick, irritable, and impetuous; subject to political prejudices and strong personal animosities; but possessed of a high independent spirit; honestly attached to the principles of the constitution, and fearless and indefatigable in maintaining them; that he was strict in his moral conduct, and in his attention to public decorum; an avowed member of the established church, and, though acquainted with English judicature, not a lawyer by profession."—*Prelim. Essay*, p. 97.

This descriptive and historical sketch presents, to be sure, but few very marked points: the greater portion of it is easily drawn from the letters already before the public: some of the personal qualities are assumed on very slight authority: but the almost constant residence in or near London during the specified period, the strangely intimate acquaintance with the court and cabinet, the independence of the author's situation in life, and his honourable and generous disposition, are clearly manifested in his private correspondence with Woodfall. The two latter particulars are evident by his steady refusal, in a cool and easy manner, of any share of the emolument arising from the publication of the letters collectively, of which he was urged by Woodfall to accept a moiety, and by his voluntary pledge to indemnify this courageous printer for any pecuniary injury he might sustain in case of a prosecution. It is true it may be said he was not put to the test on this point; but there is an unaffected air of dignity and sincerity in his assurances which leaves no room for doubt.

Having laid down the law of qualifications, the editor proceeds to the trial of claims; and he makes very short work with the majority of them.

"Of the first three of these reported authors of the letters, it will be sufficient to observe, without entering into any other fact whatever, that Lloyd (a clerk of the treasury, and afterwards a deputy teller of the Exchequer,) was on his death-bed at the date of the last of Junius's private letters, an essay which has sufficient proof of having been written in the possession of full health and spirits. While as to Roberts and Dyer they had both been dead for many months anterior to this period."

A quick and final negative is put on any pretensions of Dr. Butler, Mr. Rosenhagen, and Wilkes. Indeed it

was the idlest absurdity ever to mention the name of this last personage in this relation. The very positive declaration reported by an American friend of General Lee to have been made by that officer that he was the author of the Letters, leads the editor into some length and particularity of examination, the result of which perfectly falsifies the pretension. It is proved by a comparison of the dates of some of Lee's letters, published in a memoir of him, with those of the letters of Junius, that Lee was precisely no further from Woodfall's press than Poland, during the months in which some of the first of Junius's letters, though under a different signature, were appearing in the Public Advertiser. And it appears that he was rambling, with a peculiarly restless haste, somewhere on the continent, during the time that those with the signature of Junius were appearing, sometimes at very short intervals, and accompanied by the underplot of a private correspondence with the printer, of a kind which indicates the interchange of notices, sometimes within a few hours, by conveyance to and from the bar of this or the other coffee-house. It is proved besides, from letters of Lee, that he was of opinions directly opposite to those of Junius, relative to some of the leading political men and measures of the times.

Mr. Single-Speech Hamilton has not hitherto, we believe, been absolutely and totally dismissed from all surmise of relationship to Junius; though, it seems, he constantly and even warmly disclaimed it himself, and though some of his most partial friends have disclaimed it for him. But is it not mightily curious and amusing, to hear both him and them sincerely protesting that the letters of Junius are of inferior ability and elegance to what said Single-Speech would have written! Should there be any persons, since the decease of Mr. Malone, still surviving to resent, for Mr. Hamilton's sake, a suspicion so disparaging to his talents, they may have the satisfaction of a full assurance that he was not Junius. In addition to arguments drawn by Mr. Malone from Hamilton's having never been a zealous censurer of any political party or individual statesman—from his not

having Junius's "minute commissarial knowledge of petty military matters"—from the dissimilarity of his style and figures to those of the mysterious letter-writer, &c.—it is observed,

"— That Hamilton filled the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer in Ireland, from September, 1763, to April, 1787, during the very period in which all the letters of Junius appeared, and it will not very readily be credited by any one that this is likely to have been the exact quarter from which the writer of the letters in question fulminated his severe criminations against government. The subject moreover of parliamentary reform, for which Junius was so zealous an advocate, Mr. Malone expressly tells us was considered by Hamilton to be of 'so dangerous a tendency, that he once said to a friend now living, that he would sooner suffer his right hand to be cut off than vote for it.'"

The only thing that fixed the suspicion on Hamilton, Mr. Woodfall observes, was his having "on a certain morning told the Duke of Richmond the substance of a letter of Junius, which he pretended to have just read in the Public Advertiser, but which, on consulting the Public Advertiser, was found not to appear there, an apology instead being offered for its postponement till the next day, when the letter thus previously adverted to by Hamilton did actually make its appearance." This fact, the editor informs us, was told him by the late Duke of Richmond himself; and he considers it as explained with a perfect probability by supposing that, as Hamilton was acquainted with the late Mr. Woodfall, and used to call sometimes at his office, the letter in question had been read to him, or its substance recited, by Mr. Woodfall. It is worth adding, that the fac-similes show not the slightest resemblance between the hand-writing of Hamilton and of Junius.

What is humiliation to one man is matter of ambition to another. If the vanity of Mr. Single-Speech and the folly of some of his friends had so bubbled the estimate of his talents, as to make it almost a *condescension* as well as disingenuousness to have accepted the imputation of being Junius, it should seem that Mr. Hugh Boyd was, by the same imputation, flattered out of all power of maintaining an honest and firm disavowal. Though very few could be persuaded of his identity with Junius,

and though scarcely one professed to perceive in his acknowledged writings the indications of any such measure of talent as that habitually displayed by Junius ; yet this identity has been so confidently maintained by at least three writers, that Mr. Woodfall has been induced to employ as many as twenty pages in disposing of the claim ; and he has disposed of it for ever. Indeed it proves to have rested on the most trivial presumptive circumstances, and to be capable of being invalidated in a greater variety of ways than the pretensions of almost any other of the claimants. We think this examination, perhaps the best written part of the preliminary essay. It is impossible however to abridge it ; and we shall content ourselves with transcribing one page which recapitulates a considerable part of the argument, in the form of showing what answer could have been made by the late Mr. Woodfall, if he had chosen, to an impertinent personal address of Almon, one of the assertors of Boyd's claims, assuming that Mr. Woodfall could produce no negative evidence. To a challenge made in so uncivil a manner no reply was made.

“ Woodfall well knew the hand-writings of both Junius and Boyd, and was in possession of many copies of both ; and knowing them he well knew they were different. He well knew that Junius was a man directly implicated in the circle of the court, and immediately privy to its most secret intrigues ; and that Boyd was very differently situated, and that whatever information he collected was by circuitous channels alone. Junius he knew to be a man of affluence considerably superior to his own wants, refusing remunerations to which he was entitled, and offering reimbursements to those who suffered on his account ; Boyd to be labouring under great pecuniary difficulties, and ready to accept whatever was offered him ;* or, in the language of Mr. Almon, ‘ a broken gentleman without a guinea in his pocket.’ Junius he knew to be a man of considerably more than his own age, who from a long and matured experience of the world was entitled to read him lessons in moral and prudential philosophy ; Boyd to be at the same time a very young man, who had not even reached his majority, totally without plan, and almost without experience of any kind, who, in the prospect of divulging himself to Woodfall, could not possibly have written to him,

* It appears that Boyd was in a kind of retreat in Ireland, in consequence of pecuniary distress and the fear of being arrested, at the very time that Junius refused to receive any share of the profits which had arisen from the sale of his collected letters.

'After a *long experience of the world*, I affirm before God I never knew a rogue who was not unhappy.' Boyd he knew to be an imitator and copyist of Junius; Junius to be no copyist of any man, and least of all of himself. Junius he knew to be a decided mixt-monarchy man, who opposed the ministry upon constitutional principles; Boyd to be a wild, random republican, who opposed them upon revolutionary views: Junius to be a writer who could not have adopted the signature of Democrates or Democraticus; Boyd a writer who could, and, we are told, did so, in perfect uniformity with his political creed. Woodfall, it is true, did not pretend to know Junius personally; but from his hand-writing, his style of composition, age, politics, rank in life, and pecuniary affluence, he was perfectly assured that *Junius could not be Boyd*."—Prelim. Essay, p. 152.

The imputation of the letters to Mr. Dunning is very briefly discussed and dismissed. It is readily admitted there is a greater aggregate of presumptions in his favour. "His age, and rank in life, his talents and learning, his brilliant wit, and sarcastic habit, his common residence during the period in question, his political principles, attachments, and antipathies," would concur to mark him as the man. But the editor is of opinion a few opposing facts are decisive. He thinks credit is due to the veracity of such a person as Junius must have been, when he almost gratuitously made the positive declaration, in his preface to the letters, "*I am no lawyer by profession*." And this declaration is corroborated by several passages in his correspondence with Woodfall and Wilkes. To the latter he complains of the heavy disadvantage, imposed by the secret of his personality, of being debarred from "*consulting the learned*," on legal or constitutional points. In another letter he says,

"The constitutional argument is obvious; I wish you to point out to me where you think the force of the *formal legal* argument lies. In pursuing such inquiries I lie under a singular disadvantage. Not venturing to consult those who are qualified to inform me, I am forced to collect every thing from books or common conversation. The pains I took with that paper upon privilege, were greater than I can express to you. Yet after I had blinded myself with poring over journals, debates, and parliamentary history, I was at last obliged to hazard a bold assertion, which I am now convinced is true (as I really then thought it), because it has not been disproved or disputed."

Toward the conclusion of the same long letter, there is a remarkable passage, which has the appearance of

being prompted by truth and feeling ; which at any rate seems, where it occurs, too little called for to be, with any sort of fairness, accounted falsehood and affectation. Having employed a particular word in the technical sense of the law, he says, "Though I use the terms of art, do not injure me so much as to suspect I am a lawyer. —I had as lief be a Scotchman."

And then too, when it is recollected that Dunning, who was Solicitor-General at the time when these letters first appeared, had the character of "high unblemished honour, and high independent principles," the editor very reasonably pronounces that it, "cannot be supposed he would have vilified the king, while one of the king's confidential servants and counsellors." He might have added that if the letters of Junius, both public and private, can be admitted to bear decisive evidence to any one quality in the moral temperament of the writer, it is an utter detestation of meanness and self-interested duplicity. We should think besides, if it were allowable to hazard a judgment from the very slight specimens we may have seen of Dunning's style, (so brilliantly described by Sir William Jones) that a very considerable difference would have been apparent between compositions from his pen and these famous letters. We should have expected in a work from him more labour of subtle refinement—more artifice, and perhaps we may say quaint peculiarity of expression—a greater frequency of ingenious sparkles—less of what may be at least comparatively denominated a plain direct style of writing—a less sparingness, as if in disdain, of rhetorical device and ornament—a less uniformly sustained tone of bold austerity, and a much less decided clearness, in topics and phraseology, of any cast and colour of his profession. —It may be noticed here also that there is no sort of resemblance between the hand-writings of Dunning and Junius.

But little having been attempted in support of any pretensions of Mr. Flood, the celebrated Irish orator, it is enough to say that the editor's argument of negation is equally brief and conclusive.

It is probable that but few of the persons inquisitive about this secret have now any suspicion of Burke. This suspicion however appears to have prevailed very extensively at the time the letters appeared; and the editor very properly entertains and examines the question. We think he proves the suspicion to be entirely devoid of probability.

"Burke could not have written in the style of Junius, which was precisely the reverse of his own; nor could he have consented to have disparaged his own talents in the manner in which Junius has disparaged them, in his letter to the Printer of the Public Advertiser, Oct. 5, 1771.* Independently of which, he denied that he was the author of these letters, expressly and satisfactorily to Sir William Draper, who purposely interrogated him upon the subject; the truth of which denial is, moreover, corroborated by the testimony of the late Mr. Woodfall, who repeatedly declared that neither Hamilton nor Burke was the writer of these compositions."—"If, however, there should be readers so inflexible as still to believe that Mr. Burke was the real writer of the Letters, and that his denial of the fact to Sir W. Draper was only wrung from him under the influence of fear, it will be sufficient to satisfy even such readers, to show that the system of politics of the one was in direct opposition to that of the other on a variety of the most important points. Burke was a decided partizan of Lord Rockingham, and continued so during the whole of that nobleman's life: Junius on the contrary was as decided a friend of Mr. George Grenville. Each was an antagonist to the other on the great subject of the American Stamp Act. Junius was a warm and powerful advocate for triennial parliaments; Burke an inveterate enemy to them. To which the editor may be allowed to add, that while Mr. Burke, in correcting his manuscripts for the press, and revising them in their passage through it, is notorious for the numerous alterations he was perpetually making, the copy with which the late Mr. Woodfall was furnished by Junius for the genuine edition of his Letters contained very few amendments of any kind."

Another circumstance is mentioned by the editor as almost sufficient of itself, in the absence of all other evidence, to put an end to all doubt.

* The passage here referred to is comprised in one line. Junius has been representing, in a tone of moderation somewhat unusual to him, how very desirable it is that the disagreement and mutual repulsion of political men should not have the effect of depriving a good cause of the services which they might separately contribute to it, each in his own way; and having specified a few of the services which might be obtained, and should be accepted, from several individuals of that time, he says, "I willingly accept a sarcasm from Colonel Barré, and a simile from Mr. Burke." To any reader of Junius it is quite unnecessary to observe that from *him* this was an expression of very pointed depreciation.

"The prosecution which Mr. Burke instituted against Mr. Woodfall, the printer of the *Public Advertiser*, and conducted with the utmost acrimony, for a paper deemed libellous that appeared in this journal in the course of 1783. Considerable interest was made with Mr. Burke to induce him to drop this prosecution, in different stages of its progress, but he was inexorable. The cause was tried at Guildhall, July 15, 1784, and a verdict of a hundred pounds damages obtained against the printer; the whole of which was paid to the prosecutor. It is morally impossible that Junius could have acted in this manner; every anecdote in the preceding sketch of his public life forbids the belief that he could."

We are persuaded this will be the opinion of almost every reader of the private letters to Woodfall, which carry in the most unaffected manner, so many indications of a respectful kindness, and of grateful approbation of the printer's courage and discretion; such proofs of concern for his safety, such marks of confidence in communicating information relative to secrets of state and the characters of great personages, when the communication could be useful in explaining the purpose of Junius, or regulating the conduct of the publisher; in short, so pleasing an appearance of something approaching a personal friendship between the two strangers, accompanied all the while by the involuntary signs of an exceedingly high-toned and independent character in the writer—that there is no believing this printer, maintaining too, as he appears to have done, a profound respect and an inviolable discretion towards the mysterious author, should ever meet this lofty spirit on the inimical and sordid ground of prosecution and pecuniary damages.

The last in the list of suspected persons is Lord George Sackville. The brief statement of probabilities with respect to him is miserably unsatisfactory; and the more so as it is apparent the writer does not choose to say all he could say on the question; whether from an idea that the imposing dignity of Junius will be lessened in proportion to the dissipation in any degree of the shade of mystery that surrounds him, or from a sort of coquettish disposition that wishes to be courted for further explanations, we pretend not to say. We may

as well transcribe the little that is vouchsafed on the subject; at the same time professing ourselves ready to receive with all due sense of obligation any further information which he may be coaxed or provoked to communicate;—we say *provoked*, for undoubtedly his being flatly told that he *has* no more to communicate, would be the most likely expedient to make him disclose any thing he may have chosen yet to withhold.

“Let us proceed to the pretensions that have been offered on the part of Lord George Sackville. The evidence is somewhat indecisive even to the present hour. Sir William Draper divided his suspicions between this nobleman and Mr. Burke, and upon the personal and unequivocal denial of the latter, he transferred them entirely to the former: and that Sir William was not the only person who suspected his Lordship even from the first, is evident from the private letter of Junius, which asserts that Swinney had actually called on Lord Sackville, and taxed him with being Junius, to his face. This letter is, in fact, one of the most curious of the whole collection: if written by Lord George Sackville, it settles the point at once; and, if not written by him, presupposes an acquaintance with his Lordship’s family, his sentiments, and his connexions, so intimate as to excite no small degree of astonishment. Junius was informed of Swinney’s having called upon Lord George a few hours after his call, and he knew that *before this time* he had never spoken to him in his life. It is certain then that Lord George Sackville was early and generally suspected, that Junius knew him to be suspected without denying, (as in the case of the author of ‘The Whig, &c.’) that he was suspected *wrongfully* [justly]; and that this nobleman, if not Junius himself, must have been in habits of close and intimate friendship with him. The talents of Lord George were well known and admitted, and his political principles led him to the same side of the question that was so warmly espoused by Junius. It is said, however, that on one occasion his Lordship privately observed to a friend of his, ‘I should be proud to be capable of writing as Junius has done: but there are many passages in his letters I should be very sorry to have written.’ Such a declaration, however, is too general to be in any way conclusive: even Junius himself might, in a subsequent period, have regretted that he had written some of the passages that occur in his letters. In the case of his letter to Junia, we know he did, from his own avowal. It is nevertheless peculiarly hostile to the opinion in favour of Lord George Sackville, that Junius should roundly have accused him of want of courage, as he has done in Vol. II. p. 491. The facts, however, are fairly before the reader, and he shall be left to the exercise of his own judgment.”—p. 161.

In another part of the Essay, the subject is adverted to in these terms:—

“The fact [Swinney’s calling on Lord George Sackville] was true, and occurred but a day or two before the letter [private letter of Junius

to Woodfall] was written : but how Junius, unless he had been Lord Sackville himself should have been so soon acquainted with it, baffles all conjecture."—"In the Miscellaneous Letters, the reader will meet with a passage, pretty conclusively showing the little ground there ever was for any such opinion," [as that Lord George Sackville was Junius.]

The conclusive passage referred to, is in a paper which appeared in the Public Advertiser, October 22, 1767, and is attributed, by the editor, with sufficient probability, to Junius. It is a caustic satire, in the form of minutes of a grand council, on the subject of drawing up instructions to Lord Townsend on his being appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The assembled statesmen know nothing at all about the matter ; no instructions, nor even general basis of instructions, are determined on ; and Lord Townsend is made to say at last, "I believe the best thing I can do will be to consult with my Lord George Sackville. His character is known and respected in Ireland as much as it is here ; and I know he loves to be stationed in the *rear* as well as myself." This is an allusion to the conduct of Lord George in the celebrated battle of Minden, in 1759, in which he commanded the right wing (consisting chiefly of the British, with some German cavalry) of Prince Ferdinand's army. His Lordship was accused of disobeying the Prince's orders for the quick advance of the cavalry, at a moment when a rapid charge would have ensured the almost entire capture or destruction of the French army, already in a state of complete rout. On his trial Lord Sackville produced very direct evidence that there was uncertainty and inconsistency in the orders, as announced to him by two aides-de-camp of the Prince, and declared that the delay which constituted the alleged crime was purely an indispensable halt, till he could obtain a precise command from the general. On the other hand, there was equally positive evidence that the orders had been communicated to him in a manner sufficiently distinct ; and on this evidence the military court dismissed his Lordship from the service, in terms disqualifying him from ever being again admitted into it.—This affair is very significantly

and bitingly alluded to in a letter signed Titus, which appeared in the Public Advertiser, in defence of the Marquis of Granby against Junius, as early as the third or fourth of Junius's letters.

In whatever manner the cause of Lord George Sackville was managed before the court-martial, it will certainly be the opinion of the reader, who is so obligingly left to form his own unbiassed judgment, that in the second trial of his Lordship, on an arraignment for writing Junius letters, the case could not well have been more meagrely and evasively stated. Why does not the editor plainly tell the public what his father, who must unquestionably have had an opinion, thought on the question? Why does he not relate some of those numerous small particulars, of fact and surmise, which must have occurred to his father's vigilance in the course of so many years that he lived and so much discussion that he heard? Certainly we can well believe that respectable printer felt himself, to a considerable extent, as the phrase is, on honour; and restrained his curiosity from any modes of inquisition which his haughty and confiding correspondent would have regarded and resented as prying and impertinent, after he had decisively signified his wish and will to be unknown. But nevertheless it is plainly impossible that his mind should not have been, both during and long after the period of the correspondence, habitually on the watch for any indicative glimpses of the important stranger:—unless, indeed, he early acquired so confident an opinion as to who was the man, that he had no longer doubt enough to be curious. And it was just as impossible that to a mind thus prepared and prompt to catch any casual lights, in a situation, too, and with acquaintance, like those of Mr. Woodfall, *no* limits and significant incidents should ever have occurred to guide or confirm conjecture. Now are we to suppose that the present editor and essayist was not deemed worthy of so much of his father's confidence as to be admitted to look through any of the little chinks and crevices of the secret; that his father would never either voluntarily relate to him any of the particulars

which must have been so interesting to himself, or give an explicit answer to any of the hundreds of minute questions which the son must have had less curiosity than other mortals if he did not ask? If we are not to make a supposition so little flattering to our essayist, we may very fairly repeat, as many readers will, the question, why are not whatever were deemed the most illustrative of these particulars freely given to the public at once? Why may not the public be now put in possession of all the probabilities that Mr. Woodfall judged himself to possess? For instance, in stating the question relatively to Lord George Sackville, why did not the editor say whether his father did not, at some time or other, in so many years, meet with any specimen of that nobleman's hand-writing, and, if he did, what were his observations on comparing it with that of Junius? If he did ever meet with such a specimen, under circumstances allowing opportunity for a careful comparison, we need not say how far his deliberately avowed opinion as to the identity or diversity of the hands, would go toward a decision on his Lordship's claims. It is even fair to ask why, when a fac-simile is given in the book of the hand-writing of every other person for whom a plausible, and of several for whom no plausible pretension is stated to have been advanced, no such aid is afforded to the question as affecting Lord George. Could it not be obtained, or is the omission a little artifice for preserving the desirable and stimulant quantity of uncertainty round the last of the persons brought in discussion, after the interest of suspecting and doubting had been extinguished with respect to the whole preceding lists of claimants?*

In one of the letters sent to the Public Advertiser with a different signature, but given on very sufficient authority as from Junius, (Vol. II. p. 486) the writer says,

* The fac-similes here given of Junius's hand-writing are a whole set of specimens, showing all its varieties, which indeed are *radically*, very inconsiderable. We are disposed to hope their publication may have the effect of drawing from some quarter or other, into equal publicity, a sample or two of the writing of Lord George Sackville.

when speaking of Lord Townsend, Lord Lieutenant, and his brother, the Hon. Charles Townsend, Chancellor of the Exchequer, of Ireland, "I am not a stranger to this *par nobile fratrum* : I have *served under* the one, and have forty times been promised to be *served by* the other." It is not impossible that this might be a fictitious fact, pretended in order to give some weight to the opinions of an unknown correspondent ; but it seems at least as probable it might be true. Now Mr. Woodfall would be very likely to make some little research into any existing public documents of Lord Townsend's military history, (we presume the "service" was military) to ascertain whether at any time Lord George Sackville was among his officers ; and he would never fail to catch any references bearing on the subject that occurred in conversation. Did our editor never hear him say what was the result of such examination, or such listening ?

Whether it be from intention or through negligence, there is a want of uniformity in the expressions, occurring here and there, respecting the late Mr. Woodfall's ignorance of the real author. The language in some places would seem to attribute to him an unqualified ignorance ; in others it seems intended to import that he *all but absolutely knew*—that he must have had at least what he deemed a very probable guess.

On the whole, we suppose the generality of readers, while pleased to see so many pretensions finally put out of the question, and while disgusted much with the present editor's whiffling language, ostentatious reserve, and petty air of mystery, respecting his father's knowledge and opinions, and respecting the illustrative particulars bearing on the claim of Lord George Sackville, will be inclined, though with a perception that the evidence is very narrow and unsatisfactory, to confer on that nobleman "the vacant honours of Junius."

The affirmative appearances are indeed somewhat affected by the allusion to Minden, in terms coinciding with the popular opinion against Lord George, in a paper attributed with strong probability to Junius. Would it be altogether out of character to suppose, that a proud

spirit might please itself with the dignity of its own justice in thus choosing to make a condemnatory reflection on itself? It may be remarked too that the supposition of Lord George's being Junius, would supply one reason, in addition to all considerations of personal safety, for the unrelenting resolution of perpetual secrecy. We may imagine the writer chose to live down to future times, under the imperial name of Junius, in preference to his own, and that he was resolved no blemish, no mark of disgrace to be triumphed over by men that he despised, should be transferred from his real to that proud adopted name. We can really suppose him to feel a kind of sullen exultation in this transmigration, so to call it, out of a personality and a name that the world had gained some advantages against, into the impassible, commanding, avenging, and immortal form of Junius.

We must here suspend our remarks. We shall occupy a few pages of our next number with an account of the nature of the very large supplement which this edition makes to the avowed and celebrated writings of this unknown author.

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In a former number more than enough space was occupied with the inquiry, Who was Junius? We shall, therefore, no further resume the subject, than just to remark how perverse, after all, is the curiosity which has so pertinaciously stimulated the research. For it may be presumed, that no reader, who has been gratified by the strength of the impression which the letters have made upon him, can wish to feel that impression weakened. He would not wish to lose what may be called the poetical part of the impression, the sensation, as if the fabled Minos, the Judge in the Shades, had been realized; or, as if he were carried back to the time of the Secret Tribunal, and beheld, by a glimmering at midnight, the dubious and veiled form of its chief. And yet it is obvious that this part of the impression would be lost, the moment that the mystery should be completely removed, and the gloomy resident of an in-

accessible cavern, whence he has alarmed the people with formidable sounds, or transient visits in the darkness, he brought forth to view, in the plain unquestionable shape of Counsellor Dunning, Lord George Sackville, or any other personage of known and familiar reality. For our own part, therefore, feeling more gratification from the effect of this accompaniment of mystery, than we know of any real advantage that would follow from a perfect disclosure, we can, on second thoughts, be content that the investigation should be finally baffled. And, unless the present editor, inherits from his father something much more explicit on the side of positive evidence, than any thing he has communicated, it seems now not very unlikely, that the secret may substantially, be perpetual. We say, substantially; for surmises, however strong and probable, though they may serve very well for an ingenious argument, or a confident assertion, will still leave a consciousness of being very far from having an absolute hold on a fact. The total uncertainty that to this day has attended the inquiry, would seem to be a decisive proof of the sincerity of the writer, in avowing his determination to remain for ever unknown to the public; and is equally a proof, that if not entirely without private confidants, they must have been persons of most extraordinary discretion as well as fidelity. That he was not absolutely "the sole depository of his own secret," is evident, if there be any truth in one of his private letters to Woodfall, expressing his mortification at having published, a day or two before, the foolish, or worse than foolish letter, in answer to a writer signed Junia. In this note he says, "I assure you it was printed against my own opinion. The truth is, there are people about me, whom I would not wish to contradict, and who would rather see Junius in the papers, even so improperly, than not at all." In another of the private letters he says, "The gentleman who transacts the conveyancing part of our correspondence tells me, there was much difficulty last night."

During the period of the appearance of the letters, there are repeated indications in the private correspon-

dence, of great solicitude to secure himself in the profoundest secrecy. "I must," he says, in one of his communications, "be more cautious than ever: I am sure I should not survive a discovery three days; or, if I did, they would attain me by bill." In another he says, "Tell me candidly, whether you know, or suspect, who I am?" In another, "Upon no account, nor for any reason whatever, are you to write to me, until I give you notice." "Change to the Somerset Coffee-house, and let no mortal know the alteration. I am persuaded you are too honest a man to contribute in any way to my destruction. Act honourably by me, and at a proper time you shall know me." "The Somerset Coffee-house," says the editor, "formed only one of a great variety of places, at which answers and other parcels from the printer's were ordered to be left. A common name, such as was not likely to excite any peculiar attention, was first chosen by Junius, and a common place of deposit indicated: the parcels from Junius himself were sent direct to the printing-office, and whenever a parcel or letter in return was waiting for him, it was announced in the notices to correspondents by such signals as "N. E. C."—"A letter."—"C. in the usual place," "an old correspondent shall be attended to,"—"or by a line of Latin poetry."

The private letters to Woodfall are generally very short, and they form the secret history of the public series. Many of them would be quite insignificant but for the impossibility of dissociating a character of some importance with whatever was written by such a man, under such circumstances. They are in a simple, laconic, correct, and even easy style; but it is a relative ease, never for a moment partaking of the playfulness of a careless man: it is the expression without effort of a man, whom yet this very expression indicates to have been rigorously disciplined to exertion and caution, and habituated to the gravest tone of feeling. The most pleasing passages are those in which he shows, in an unaffected manner, a kind interest for the printer, whose humble co-operation was so important to him, and whose

courage and faithful discretion were inestimable. Certainly, a man so perfectly sensible of his own lofty rank, in point of ability and importance, may well afford to do full justice to the merits of a subordinate co-operator. But, nevertheless, we think that the examples are of most rare occurrence, in which this is done so freely, so unaffectedly, and so respectfully, as it is done by Woodfall's correspondent, in the same short letter, perhaps, in which he speaks in the language of contempt and defiance of some of the *biggest* people in the realm. Of this latter kind there is a very characteristic passage relative to some threatening intimations of a prosecution from the Duke of Bedford.

"As to *you*, it is clearly my opinion, that you have nothing to fear from the Duke of Bedford. I reserve some things expressly to awe him, in case he should think of bringing you before the House of Lords. I am sure I can threaten him privately with such a storm, as would make him tremble even in his grave."

If we might, in any case, trust to the perfect sincerity of expressions of contempt for what are called the great, (which, doubtless, are generally the splenetic effusion of envy, mortified pride, or disappointed ambition,) one should be tempted to give this credit to a censor, who gives such unequivocal proofs of *really knowing what it is*, that he every where treats with so little ceremony. At any rate, we are inclined to honour him, we confess, for having set a bold example of throwing aside, with respect to those orders of mortals, whose situation affects the popular mind with a kind of superstition, the conventional diction of ceremony and reverence, and speaking of them in the terms of a plain, direct estimate of their qualities. Though we would not refuse, for the sake of maintaining order in the community, a somewhat extra quantum of civility to elevated rank and station, yet we should think it tolerably clear on the other hand, that the preservation of that very order itself depends incomparably more on the standard of morality being kept simple and invariable, an object which is contravened and defeated, to the infinite prejudice of the morals of mankind, by the current phraseology of

homage to the uppermost sort of our fellow-sinners, whatever may be their folly or iniquity.

These private notes contain a number of plain avowals of the great expense of labour bestowed on the public letters, especially those with the renowned signature, and of his opinion of the able execution of some of them; and several admonitions to the printer to do them justice, by accuracy in *his* department. "I have only to desire," he says in one place, "that the dedication and preface may be correct. Look to it. If you take it upon yourself, I will not forgive your suffering it to be spoiled. I weigh every word; and every alteration, in my eyes at least, is a blemish." "The enclosed (Junius, Letter XLI, to Lord Mansfield) though begun within these few days, has been greatly laboured. It is very correctly copied, and I beg you will take care it be literally printed as it stands." "At last I have concluded my great work (Junius, Letter LXVIII, also to Lord Mansfield,) and I assure you, with no small labour. The paper is, in my opinion, of the highest style of Junius, and cannot fail to sell." "I am strangely partial to the enclosed, (Junius, Letter XLIX, to the Duke of Grafton.) It is finished with the utmost care. If I find myself mistaken in my judgment of this paper, I positively will never write again."

The expression "for God's sake," is profanely employed twice in these notes, on unimportant occasions. And several other licences occur here and there in this large assemblage, which make it too doubtful whether his general forbearance of transgression be not fully as much attributed to a certain sense of dignity, as to any dread of violating religion.

The last of the private letters to Woodfall is dated January the 19th, 1773, later by almost a year than the concluding letter of Junius, and many months later than what the editor has given as the last public letter from the same writer, with any other signature. There is a letter which was sent to him by Mr. Woodfall, of the date of March the 7th, 1773, and it closes by "begging the favour of a line in answer." But whether any

answer was given, remains in the dark, for the editor expressly says, "The letter of January the 19th is the very last we have any certain knowledge that Junius ever addressed to Mr. Woodfall." During a few subsequent months, several signals were thrown out in the Public Advertiser, by Mr. Woodfall, to induce the giant to come forth again from his cave; but the editor says, "there is no reason for believing that Junius ever broke through the silence, on which he so inflexibly determined on January the 19th, or consented to re-appear before the public in any character whatever." This last letter we transcribe.

"January 19, 1773.

"I have seen the signals thrown out for your old friend and correspondent. Be assured that I have good reason for not complying with them. In the present state of things, if I were to write again, I must be as silly as any of the horned cattle that run mad through the city, or as any of your wise aldermen. I meant the cause and the public. Both are given up. I feel for the honour of this country, when I see that there are not ten men in it, who will unite and stand together, on any one question. But it is all alike, vile and contemptible.

"*You* have never flinched that I know of; and I shall always rejoice to hear of your prosperity.

"If you have any thing to communicate (of moment to yourself) you may use the last address, and give a hint."

The next portion of the work is a "Private Correspondence between Junius and Mr. Wilkes." It appears they were introduced to this correspondence through the medium of Mr. Woodfall, who conveyed messages between them, as appears from the correspondence on which we have just been remarking, and who was even directed by Junius to submit one or two of his articles to Mr. Wilkes's inspecting, previously to publication. It is evident, however, throughout this series of letters between Junius and Mr. Woodfall, that the former remained as much unknown to the latter, as he was to other men; and it is said, that Wilkes always declared that he never penetrated the secret.

Those who have from a later period contemplated (and indeed now almost forgotten) the character and the whole career of Wilkes, will be apt to feel some slight

revolting at such a conjunction. And certainly we think that Junius appears much too indulgent to the immoral character of that daring and turbulent demagogue, and willing to anticipate more public good than his knowledge of human nature should have suffered him to augur, from the activity of so self interested and grossly vicious a man. At the same time we think it will appear evident, that this short epistolary intercourse was entered into, on the part of Junius, solely from a wish to give to that activity a more regulated and steady direction to the real and necessary vindication of the liberties of the people. And certainly the combat so intrepidly maintained by Wilkes against the encroachments both of the Court and the Parliament, deserved some aiding and guiding interference of a more judicious and dignified spirit, which spirit, however, ought at the same time to have been much severer against his depravity. In taking upon him to be Wilkes's adviser (for the interference is decidedly of this character,) Junius maintains a good deal of the high tone of dictator, though softened by more of the amicable, than his correspondent deserved. We will transcribe the beginning of his first letter.

"I presume, Sir, you are satisfied that I mean you well, and that it is not necessary to assure you, that while you adhere to the resolution of depending only upon the public favour (which, if you have half the understanding I attribute to you, you can never depart from) you may rely upon my utmost assistance. Whatever imaginary views may be ascribed to the author, it must always remain a part of Junius's plan to support Mr. Wilkes, while *he* makes common cause with the people. I would engage your favourable attention to what I am going to say to you ; and I entreat you not to be too hasty in concluding, from the apparent tendency of this letter, to any possible interests or connexions of my own. It is a very common mistake in judgment, and a very dangerous one in conduct, first to look for nothing in the argument proposed to us, but the motive of the man who uses it, and then to measure the truth of his argument by the motive we have assigned to him. With regard to me, Sir, any refinements in this way, would assuredly mislead you ; and though I do not disclaim the idea of some personal views to future honour and advantage, (you would not believe me if I did) yet I can truly affirm, that neither are they little in themselves, nor can they, by any possible conjecture, be collected from my writings."

Whatever were the objects of a personal nature, which he does not think he should be believed in disclaiming,

he pleads at the close of the next letter, which he expects to be the last to Wilkes, that any rate *as Junius* he *must* be disinterested.

"I have faithfully served the public, without the possibility of a personal advantage. As Junius, I can never expect to be rewarded. The secret is too important to be committed to any great man's discretion. If views of interest or ambition could tempt me to betray my own secret, how could I flatter myself that the man I trusted would not act upon the same principles, and sacrifice me at once to the King's curiosity and resentment? Speaking therefore as a disinterested man, I have a claim to your attention."

Adverting, in another place, to the same mystery of his personality, of which, as a great infelicity to, and advantage over, his correspondent, Wilkes respectfully complained, yet forbearing all impertinent inquisitiveness, this inhabitant of darkness replies,

"Besides every personal consideration, if I were known I could no longer be an useful servant to the public. At present there is something oracular in the delivery of my opinions. I speak from a recess which no human curiosity can penetrate, and darkness, we are told, is one source of the sublime.—The mystery of Junius increases his importance."

These letters, for the greater proportion, relate to the political management of the city, as to parties and the election of chief magistrates, and to the principles of a kind of manifesto, in the shape of political resolutions published by a society called Supporters of the Bill of Rights. There is great shrewdness in the observations on the personal and party concerns, and much sound sober thinking in those on political principles and plans of reform. Though an ardent reformist, and most mortal hater of the parliamentary corruption, which he perhaps thought (for, after all, he was neither prophet nor conjurer,) could not go any greater length than he had witnessed, he was far enough from being a wild projector of mere innovation. He strongly insisted against the opinion of Wilkes and his associates, on the superior advantages of triennial to those of annual parliaments; and, with an earnest wish that the political system were rid of the rotten boroughs, he yet deliberately balances,

and inclines towards the negative of the question, whether the legislature has, in theory, the rightful power, and whether it would be, on the whole account, beneficial that it should have and exert the power, of disfranchising them. The grand danger, as he pretends to argue, of conceding such a power is, that a wicked legislature (it is a bad indication we fear, as to his own probity that he could so readily fancy the possible existence of such a thing) might employ this power with the most pernicious effect against liberty and the people, by disfranchising any place of which the inhabitants or the representatives could not be bribed or intimidated from active hostility against state iniquity.

It does not appear that the reasonings or the authority of even Junius, regarded, as it is evident from Wilkes's letters that he was, with sincere deference, had much practical influence on that political desperado or his partisans. Those letters are extremely shrewd and lively, and expressive of almost every thing in patriotism except any the slightest degree of real concern for the welfare of the community. With this man even Johnson was beguiled out of his austerity and his personal animosity; and Junius is at moments seduced into pleasantries; he is even betrayed into the disclosure of great laxity as to such moral principles as are not directly implicated in political justice. It is deplorable to hear a man of high and grave intelligence, the indignant advocate and avenger of virtue, when insulted *from some quarters*, talking in the following strain, and that to a man like Wilkes, whose timorous over-scrupulous conscience was so much in need of being quieted!

"I too am no enemy to good fellowship, and have often cursed that canting parson for wishing to deny you your claret. It is for *him* and men like *him*, to beware of intoxication. Though I do not place the little pleasures of life in competition with the glorious business of instructing and directing the people, yet I see no reason why a wise man may not unite the public virtues of Cato, with the indulgence of Epicurus."

But he was an excellent preceptor, as he was a consummate judge, as to those points of propriety of con-

duct which were likely to effect Wilkes's consequence with the public. For example.

"Depend upon it, the perpetual union of *Wilkes* and *mob* does you no service. Not but I love and esteem the mob. It is your interest to keep up dignity and gravity besides. I would not make myself cheap by walking the streets so much as you do. *Verbum Sat.*"

In one or two of the letters from Junius there appears to be some heinous and dreadful sedition, glimmering with "doubtful and malignant light" from black stars, sparks, we suppose, or diminutive fragments of that black sun which Lilly conceived to be the cause of night, ray-ing out darkness as the bright sun does light.

The celebrated Letters constitute the next portion of the work. On this it is not here necessary to make any remark, except that the editor has greatly augmented its value by many explanatory notes, and the insertion of some public documents of those times, adapted to make the readers of the present and future times much more masters of the intention, and better judges of the justice, of many parts of the letters. A number of the most effective, and several of the most virulent strictures of his contemporaries, are reprinted from the Public Advertiser, which freely admitted the productions of his adversaries, a liberality to which he had no objection, as it brought materials directly under the operation of his engines, and presented him immediately in a comparison from which he scorned to acknowledge, either publicly or privately, that he had any thing to fear. His contempt of his opponents is expressed in one of his private letters in connexion with an observation well worth quoting for its shrewdness.

"As you will probably never hear from me again, I will not omit this opportunity of observing to you, that I am not properly supported in the newspapers. One would think that all the fools were of the other side of the question. As to myself it is of little moment. I can brush away the swarming insects whenever I think proper. But it is bad policy to let it appear, in any instances, that we have not numbers as well as justice of our side."

His contempt of his adversaries must not, however, be

uniformly taken as either a just estimate of their abilities, or an infallible decision of the point of truth and justice between the combatants. It is impossible but several of the papers here reprinted must have considerably galled and considerably embarrassed him. And the reader will not fail to perceive that he was convicted of much more inaccuracy and injustice that can be pardoned to a man who will never acknowledge or retract them.

The last portion, consisting of the Miscellaneous Letters, contains, as we have already said, nearly as much composition as all the public letters under the signature of Junius. The number is a hundred and thirteen. The series begins with two letters signed Poplicola, followed by one signed Anti-Sejanus, full of the most acrimonious invective against Lord Chatham, who ultimately obtained a considerable share of the writer's favour. The following extract is quite as courteous as many pages preceding it.

"It is worth while to consider, though perhaps not safe to point out, by what arts it hath been possible for him (Bute) to maintain himself so long in power, and to skreen himself from national justice. Some of them have been obvious enough; the rest may without difficulty be guessed at. But whatever they are, it is not above a twelve-month ago since they might have all been defeated, and the venomous spider itself caught and trampled upon in its own webs. It was then his good fortune to corrupt one man (Mr. Pitt), from whom we least of all expected so base an apostacy. Who indeed could have suspected, that it should even consist with the spirit and understanding of that person to accept of a share of power under a court minion, whom he himself had affected to detest or despise, as much as he knew he was detested and despised by the whole nation? I will not censure him for the avarice of a pension, nor the melancholy ambition of a title. These were objects which he perhaps looked up to, though the rest of the world thought them far beneath his acceptance. But, ... to shake hands with a Scotchman at the hazard of catching all his infamy; to fight under his auspices against the constitution; and to receive the word from him, prerogative and a thistle; by the once respected name of Pitt, it is even below contempt. But it seems that this unhappy country has long enough been distracted by their divisions, and in the last instance was to be oppressed by their union. May that union, honourable as it is, subsist for ever! may they continue to smell at one thistle, and not be separated even in death."

The animosity against Lord Chatham is maintained to a considerably advanced point in the series. The

editor observes, "that it was not till about the date of the fifty-fourth letter of Junius, that the author began to think commendably of this nobleman. "I am called upon," says he, in that letter, "to deliver my opinion, and surely it is not in the little censure of Mr. Horn, to deter me from doing signal justice to a man, *who, I confess, has grown upon my esteem.*" It would not, now, be of much use to inquire what degree of inconsistency, in principle, there might be in this; but the changing positions and connexions, in which that distinguished statesman's political character was presented to the public view, render it probable that an uniform opinion of him would have been a much greater inconsistency. No such variation of judgment is manifested respecting some other eminent individuals, especially the Duke of Grafton and Lord Mansfield. These are followed throughout, under whatever character or appellative the author writes, with unrelenting hostility, as objects on which he might, without the check of one compunctious feeling, exercise his utmost talent in venting his utmost acrimony. They were such exquisitely adapted fuel for the fire of his soul, which burnt with such peculiar brilliance whenever it was devouring them, that it is difficult to believe he could really wish them consigned to that exile or death which he so repeatedly invoked for them in the name of justice. The sentiment of detestation appears like the vitality of his intellectual being, and its extremest excitement was necessary to the most powerful and luxurious activity of his faculties. If he had been detained a while among more insipid topics and smaller criminals, in a comparative languor of thought through moderation of antipathy, he had only to revert to these two personages to flame out immediately in all the magnificence of fire and brimstone.

A still more marked contrariety of his judgment on individuals than even that in the instance of Lord Chatham, is displayed in his treatment of Wilkes. In an early part of this miscellaneous collection, and of a date of between three and four years anterior to that of the first letter in his amicable correspondence with

Wilkes, there is a most violent invective against his character and proceedings, and against what he represents of a most base connivance of the government, in suffering the outlaw to harbour, and publicly to stir sedition in the metropolis. *Here* there is no lenity to his vices, and no fair acknowledgment of his abilities. If Wilkes's movements did afterwards take a character and direction which Junius might, without any reversal of the principles according to which he had pronounced the former judgment, deem capable of being managed to promote the cause of liberty and the people, and therefore worthy to be abetted, yet surely, at least, such flagrant immorality and such unquestionable self-interestedness in political views, ought to have precluded, with a genuine friend of virtue, the possibility of any degree of personal cordiality.

After having already exceeded a fair allowance of space in our account of this very attractive publication, we must not think of any distinct notice of this long miscellaneous course of letters, or of their subjects. On their quality, we may observe in general, that most of them bear the most indubitable marks of coming from the same hand; besides, the particular authentications, with which the editor has been enabled to accompany a large proportion of them. Though, at a medium, not nearly so long as those in the name of Junius, though, frequently, but not always, less carefully elaborated, though sometimes descending to an offensive coarseness, incompatible with the dignity of Junius in his imperial pomp, and not containing, within a given space, quite an equal number of brilliant passages, they still disclaim every other writer. They have the same perspicuity and compression; the same sustained, and, in some degree, stately course of diction; the same certainty of hard thought, being found wherever we touch the composition; the same absence of every thing loosely extraneous, and merely ornamental, of every thing indeed that is not of the necessary substance of the work,—a work which gives an image of clear solidity and power somewhat resembling a colossal statue without drapery.

There is the same pointed decided direction towards a definable object, as contradistinguished from writing from the mere impulse to produce sentences; the same intrepidity of tone; the same acuteness of discrimination, and mischievous felicity (if such a phrase may pass) of retort; the same firm assumption of being always victorious, or of practising a condescension in accepting the rectification of any detected mistake; the same knowledge of English history and law; and the same acquaintance with contemporary personal history and political intrigue.

We meant to give our readers a much larger proportion of extracts; but it will be in a measure expressing an estimate of the talents displayed in this additional volume to say, that it is not easy to determine what to transcribe. Such passages as the following will be sufficiently indicative of their author. There are a number of letters on the occasion, which doubtless made a great impression at that time, of the forcible transfer, by the mere authority of the crown, and to serve a political purpose, of certain property in land belonging to the Duke of Portland, to Sir James Lowther, son-in-law to Lord Bute.

* * * * *

In the course of the attacks on Lord Hillsborough and his advocates, there is an instance of that effective vengeance which Junius was seldom at a loss how to take on those who presumed to triumph in the exposure of any mistake he might have committed. In arraying a transaction in which his lordship was the offender, "he had advanced it," in point of dates, "too forward by one complete week;" but the days of the week, the facts, and the order in which they succeeded one another, were the same; and therefore the argument, and the crimination of his lordship, were not at all affected by the mistake. It was exposed, it seems, in a tone of exultation, by a Mr. Ford. Junius, (writing under the signature of Lucius) acknowledged it instantly, in a few words; but a few days afterwards visited the hostility and petty triumph of this correction in the following manner, on the detector and the peer.

Wilkes, there is a more character and proceeds presents of a most base character suffering the outlaw to station in the metropolis. vices, and no fair acknowledgment of Wilkes's movements directed in the direction which Junius the principles according to former judgment, deeply promote the cause of liberty, before worthy to be able flagrant immorality and interestedness in political with a genuine friend degree of personal cordiality.

After having already space in our account of we must not think of a miscellaneous course of their quality, we may of them bear the most indolent the same hand; besides, with which the editor in large proportion of them nearly so long as those in frequently, but not always though sometimes descending incompatible with the display of pomp, and not containing equal number of brilliant every other writer. The and compression; the degree, stately courtly hard thought, the position; the neous, or that is

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of government; but was, at the same time, a most decided Anti-American.

We cannot proceed to describe the whole course of fare maintained against the government, and against individuals, throughout this volume. The Duke ofrafton, and Lords Chatham, Camden, North, Shelburne, Townsend, and Mansfield, with many persons of prior rank, suffered under the severest persecution that ever inflicted by the pen of an individual. But some of its most pungent and corrosive operations were reserved to be applied, with a relentless repetition and perseverance, to Lord Barrington, towards the conclusion of the series. He was the subject of the very last letter of the work, the last ever received by the printer for the purpose of publication, if not absolutely the last of any kind. This is signed *Nemesis*, a name appropriate, at least, as to the formidable half of that deity's vocation, to the whole known agency of this mysterious person.

If we had intended a few general remarks, we now regret either that we have made them already, or that there is little need for them here. The public will be fully and justly gratified to have obtained possession of the whole ascertainable compositions of Junius. And we think no small literary benefit may be expected to accrue from the renovated attention to such a consummate model of writing. The study of a composition so lucid, so condensed, so vigorous, and so select and moderate in argument, may surely contribute, if any thing can, to render our contemporaries ashamed of the idle negligence, the crudeness, diffuseness, and vanity of decoration, so prevalent in their compositions.

We are more dubious as to benefits of a higher order. While we should exult in any reasonable hope, that the example of Junius might contribute to stimulate able and virtuous men to a bold and persevering exertion to resist political corruption, and inflict an infamy, salutary to the public, on public delinquents, we regret that the immoderate application, in so much eloquence, of some of the worst passions of the human mind, to revenge, (for Junius cannot

be acquitted of these) will always be an example of injurious attraction;—the more injurious, as there is so much justice in his inflictions, that we are tempted to place them all to the account of justice.

One thing must strike every reader, whatever may be his reflections on it: the *press* was far more free forty years since, than it is now. There are fifty, nay, twice or thrice fifty passages, we think, in these volumes, the like of which hazarded in print at this day would incur an *ex officio* information. We deplore the excesses which, from the nature of human beings, will necessarily attend an ample freedom of printing, but the exposures made in these letters are enough to prove, that no less of this freedom than was enjoyed at that time, is enough to enable the public to judge of the characters and measures of bad powerful men. What amazement would seize the deluded people of this country, at the consequences of a sudden recovery of an equal degree of freedom of the press, and the appearance of a Junius to take advantage of it!

[February, 1813.]

Speeches of the Right Hon. Henry Grattan, with Observations. The whole comprising a Brief Review of the most Important Political Events in the History of Ireland. Vol. I. 8vo.

AT some of the most distinguished foreign places of resort for travellers, there is kept what is called an Album, a book in which there is permission for any stranger, but a particular desire for every illustrious one, to inscribe his name, together with any observations expressive of the manner in which his mind is affected by the peculiarities of the place. In proportion to the number of names and contributions of such eminent persons the book will become an interesting repository for the inspection of the travelling visitants of future times.

It may be allowed to regard the permanent literature of a country somewhat in the light of such a receptacle and repository; and it is much to be desired that all the very first-rate minds, in the course of their brief sojourn on the planet, could be induced to make a deliberate and somewhat carefully prepared contribution to this accumulation. It is peculiarly desirable that this could be exacted from men who have displayed eminent genius and comprehension as the conductors, or the censors of the conductors, of human affairs on the great scale. If they would write directly on those concerns, they might make (we are supposing the writers honest as well as able) such a representation of them as would ensure to all future time some enlightened and most instructive spaces in history. Or if they would write on more general subjects, they would do it with all the advantage of having ready for a thousand different applications the intellectual results, acquired by intense speculation exercised on a world of facts during the time those facts

were passing and disclosing their nature, under also the *practical* operation of the minds which were speculating on them.

In recollecting the names most distinguished in our political history of the last half century, we find several which cannot be mentioned without some regret that intellect and eloquence, which the agreeing testimony of contemporaries has assigned to the very highest order, should have vanished without leaving any of those memorials, in which we can contemplate the form and brightness of a great mind in a direct and immediate exhibition, without being reduced to draw our estimate by inference from the records of transactions, or to accept it from the testimony of those who had the privilege of hearing the eloquence and the argument which passed away while they delighted or astonished. Of some of these persons, who compelled admiration and homage in their day, by their prodigious mental powers, there hardly remains so much as even a selection of their most distinguished orations, reported with any tolerable fidelity, to afford a partial compensation for the want of all elaborate and regular productions of their extraordinary faculties.

The eloquent individual, a portion of whose speeches is here recovered to the Irish, and presented (for the first time in great part) to the English public, has very long been an object of much interest to the cultivated people of this country. The very great influence he had on the affairs of Ireland during a fourth part of a century, would necessarily have brought him, by the mere fact of so much actual political importance, a good deal within the contemplation of the politicians, and indeed almost the whole of the most inquisitive and informed class, of the English nation. But the consideration that this great influence was not the effect of any thing extrinsic to the man, was in no degree of the nature of that coarse and vulgar kind of domination, maintained by high rank and vast wealth, rendered him a much more striking object of attention, at least with some of us, than he could have become on the mere strength of his political

consequence—so long as that consequence should be viewed separately from its cause. And the established conviction of his extraordinary talents has long excited in many of our countrymen a wish, that like Burke and a few other great statesmen and orators, he could have been induced to adopt the literary mode of gratifying his contemporaries at a distance, and favouring posterity, with some of the best exertions and richest treasures of his mind. What an original, captivating, and instructive series of moral, political, and biographical commentaries, for instance, he could give to the world, in the free form of a review of the principal affairs and events of his own time !

In default of any regular compositions, even a selection of his speeches in the Irish Commons, authenticated as adequately reported, would long since have been received by many with great pleasure. The specimens that now and then found their way into the English prints, followed, since the Union, by the reports of his occasional exertions in what has been called the Imperial Parliament, have given the idea of an eloquence, not only marked by a peculiar and original character, but of prodigious energy and brilliance. No man that ever read a single column or paragraph of it, would be in the least danger of conceiving of Mr. Grattan as one of that kind of orators (sometimes very respectable and useful ones indeed,) into which moderate talents, accompanied by constitutional courage, may be worked by the indefatigable prosecution and habitual debating of public business. His eloquence must, in its earliest stage of public display, have evinced itself as the flame and impetus of mighty genius. The man would infallibly be recognized as of the race of the intellectual Incas, the children of the Sun.

It was, then, with much interest that we saw the first announcement of this volume, though not without some apprehension lest it should prove one of those book-making contrivances which have so often insulted and robbed the public under the form of collections of speeches. We are pleased, however, to find that though

there are evidently great defects in the reporting of the speeches, and too many instances of culpable negligence in the editing, the compilation is nevertheless of a very superior order to the currency of works of this kind, just made up for trade. The anonymous editor writes like a man of considerable ability, and evinces that cordial veneration for Mr. Grattan which would be solicitous not to injure his fame. He has an almost enthusiastic affection for Ireland, and his composition bears some strong marks of the Irish character, in its ardour, negligent expression, and exaggerating rhetoric. He appears well acquainted with the Irish history during the period included within the great orator's career; and has given a spirited sketch of it, in order to illustrate the state of the nation as Mr. Grattan found it, and the progress it made under the auspices of that most genuine patriot, and those who acted with him. The several speeches too are preceded by short and very needful explanations relative to the subjects, and the opinions entertained on them by Mr. Grattan's opponents.—We transcribe his own account of his intentions and means.

“When the Editor of Mr. Grattan's Speeches first entertained the idea of collecting and compiling the eloquence of his distinguished countryman, he was influenced by two considerations to the prosecution of so important and national a work. The first, that the present circumstances under which his country was placed required more than ever the general diffusion of those principles which first tended to promote the happiness and prosperity of Ireland.—The second, that he conceived he would add, in a great and eminent degree, to the many valuable works of this kind which are daily issuing from the press, and gratify that taste for eloquence which has been so much the object of every man's *attainment* and ambition.—The only claim which the Editor of this volume has to public patronage is, that he has spared no labour in endeavouring to give to the public the most faithful reports of the speeches which he has collected—and that he has diligently examined the various records where the best and most faithful reports could be found.”

“In collecting the productions of that mind which so eloquently poured forth its treasures—in compiling with industry and care the labours of that man whose talents raised his country from slavery to freedom, the Editor, hopes, if he shall not enjoy the praise, he may at least escape the severity of the critic; and that he shall have gratified the friend of literature and the man of taste, the admirer of genius and the advocate of liberal principles and enlightened legislature, by rescuing the speeches of Mr. Grattan from the mouldering records of

newspapers, and the widely extended surface of parliamentary debates ; and it is a debt which the Editor owes to the fame of this distinguished senator, to state, that those and similar records are the *only* sources from which he has taken the speeches now given to the public."

There is a laudable honesty in this plain acknowledgment ; at the same time it would obviously be very unlikely he *should* have any other authority than the printed reports, for the substantial materials of his compilation ; nor is there any other imaginable mode of verifying even the forms of expression, unless the orator himself could have been induced to revise these reports ; and even if he had, it is probable such a compilation would have received no assistance from his memory. His judgment might very probably have pronounced on many passages of reported speeches that he did not, because he could not, utter them so ; but what the expressions really were, it would now be, in a thousand instances as impossible for him to recollect as for any of the survivors of those that heard them. Indeed it would often have been impossible even on the day after the speeches were delivered. A train of sudden, original, and tumultuous conceptions, starting up in brilliant, arbitrary, and infinitely versatile forms of language, and as it were impetuously chasing one another away beyond the confines of the mind, will defy all the power of even that mind itself from which they sprung to recall them in their native living expression. In attempting it the orator would find himself in a situation considerably like that of a man who having yesterday beheld a grand mountain torrent, should to-day go with the intention of delineating it, but should find little more than the channel down which it was flung, in so many picturesque forms and with such power.

It seems that the Irish reporters, till so lately as a considerably advanced stage of Mr. Grattan's parliamentary career, were miserable performers. Inasmuch that the Editor has been reduced to commence the regular series of speeches in the year 1785, ten years later than Mr. Grattan's entrance into parliament, though it was about the middle and towards the latter part of this ten years that the orator made those ardent and

splendid exertions, which contributed so much toward obtaining for his country a free trade and an independent legislature. It was during that period that a great self-created army arose in Ireland, and ultimately dictated to the appalled government. It was a season of national elevation and enthusiasm, by far the most splendid that Ireland ever saw, and very rarely equalled in all history.

Mr. Grattan's genius at once contributed to inflame the enthusiasm of the people, and was kindled to greater intensity itself by the reflected fervour of the national spirit. It may well be believed that in a season so extraordinary, under the mighty stimulation of a very great passion for very great objects, that genius exploded, if the expression may be allowed, such luminous and striking forms of thought and diction, as to rival the highest eloquence of any age or country. It may even be believed, though the editor does not exactly say so, that in subsequent periods, under an excitement less approaching to preternatural, and in the prosecution of objects less magnificent, this great patriot's eloquence can only now and then, at considerable intervals, have rivalled its own former triumphant energy. This season of national ardour and eloquent effusion passed away without leaving any thing in the slightest degree approaching to a satisfactory record of the mental exhibitions that animated and enlightened it; and the Editor of this volume has been unable to furnish any thing more than a few fragments, for the most part evidently taken down in a most clumsy and discontinuous manner, of those orations of Grattan which left on the minds of their auditors the permanent impression of something reaching nearly to the limit of human genius. These slight and mutilated relics, however, the Editor justly deemed it wrong to resign to oblivion, and he has introduced them at the proper places in his historical introduction. Poorly and crudely as most of these fragments are reported, they nevertheless bear very palpably some of the marks of their origin. We shall transcribe a short passage or two from the longest of them, the only record preserved of a most memorable speech on the 16th of April, 1782, a period of the most ardent national

emotion, when the Irish were exulting, yet with mingled anxiety, in the immediate prospect of that legislative independence towards which they had been advancing with so much zeal, through so many sufferings.

"The people of Ireland have proceeded until the faculty of the nation is bound up to the great act of her own redemption. I am not very old, and yet I remember Ireland a child. I have followed her growth with anxious wishes, and beheld with astonishment the rapidity of her progress, from injuries to arms—from arms to liberty. I have seen her mind enlarge, her maxims open, and a new order of days burst in upon her.—You are not now afraid of the French, nor afraid of the English, nor afraid of one another.—You are no longer an insolvent gentry, without privilege except to tread upon a crest-fallen constituency, nor a constituency without privilege, except to tread upon a catholic body; you are now an united people, a nation manifesting itself to Europe in signal instances of glory. Turn to the rest of Europe, and you will find the ancient spirit has every where expired; Sweden has lost her liberty; England is declining; the other nations support their consequence by mercenary armies, or on the remembrance of a mighty name; but you are the only people that have recovered their constitution,—recovered it by steady virtue. You have departed from the example of other nations, and have become an example to them. You not only excel modern Europe, but you excel what she can boast of old. Liberty, in former times, was recovered by the quick feelings and rapid impulse of the populace, excited by some strong object presented to their senses. Such an object was the daughter of Virginus, sacrificed to virtue; such were the seven bishops, whose meagre and haggard looks expressed the rigour of their sufferings; but no history can produce an instance of men like you, musing for years upon oppression, and then, upon a determination of right, rescuing the land."—p. lxxxii.

"This nation is connected with England not by *allegiance* only, but *liberty*;—the crown is one great point of union, but *Magna Charta* is a greater: we could get a king any where, but England is the only country from which we could get a constitution; and it is this which makes England your natural connexion. Ireland has British privileges, and is by them connected with Britain,—both countries are united in liberty. This island was planted by British privileges as well as by British men; it is a connexion, not as Judge Blackstone has falsely said, by conquest, but as I have repeatedly said, by charter. *Liberty, we say, with England; but at all events Liberty.*"—"This right is so interwoven with your nature, that you cannot part with it though you were willing; you received it from God, and you cannot yield it to man."

The English readers of these fragments will be arrested, and perhaps not a little confounded by the boldness of some of the expressions, and the very small degree of superstitious reverence any where manifested

towards very lofty authorities. The orator was looking full in the face of the British government when he exclaimed to his fellow-countrymen :—

“ God has afforded you an opportunity to emancipate yourselves and your posterity ; wait not the issue of a general peace, when the direction of her [England's] power on this fated island may again lay you in bondage. For the honour of your country—for the honour of human nature—by the memory of your sufferings—by the sense you feel of your wrongs—by the love you owe your posterity—by the dignity and generous feelings of Irishmen—I beseech you to seize the auspicious occasion, and let this be the hour of your freedom !”

“ The oaths made to the House of Stuart were broken for the sake of liberty, and we live too near the English nation to be less than equal to it. Insulted by the British Parliament, there is no policy left for the English, but to do justice to a people, who are otherwise determined to do justice to themselves.”—“ There is no middle course left ; win the heart of an Irishman, or else cut off his hand : a nation infringed on as Ireland, and armed as Ireland, must have equal freedom ; any thing else is an insult.”—“ The British nation, if she consults with the head, or with the heart, will not or cannot refuse our claims ; or were it possible she could refuse, *I will not submit.*”

It was because sixty or seventy thousand of the people were in arms, and could not be disarmed by the government, that he could adopt such language without temerity or vain flourish. And the effect, as against government, of that most memorable armament, is a striking illustration of the influence of *success* in securing the sanction of general approbation to what, if it should fail, would incur almost as generally the character of iniquity, and perhaps infamy. There can be no doubt that had the government had power enough to dissolve this armed association of politicians, they would have been made guilty of treason for attempting to persist in their objects with menaces and brandished arms ; and sedition would have been the lightest crimination on Mr. Grattan's eloquence.

About fifteen of Mr. Grattan's speeches constitute the substance of the volume. It will easily be apprehended, that a number of them must be short, when it is mentioned that more than a third part of the space comprising the whole is occupied with one speech, on the subject of tithes, which it will require several hours to

read. The speech next in length, though much shorter, relates to an important set of commercial propositions made by the English ministry in 1785, to the Irish parliament. The other speeches are on national economy, pensions, the navigation-act, a riot act, the regency (in 1789), and a "bill for disabling revenue-officers voting at elections." Four or five speeches, not of great length, of other speakers are inserted in the series, partly to give a clearer view of the subject of debate, and partly on account of the excellence of two of the speeches, by Mr. Curran.

It is proper to give those who may be desirous of possessing this volume, a few points of fair warning. And first, it appears to us very strange that so sensible a man as the Editor, after taking such commendable pains to collect and compare the reports of the speeches, should suffer his compilation to be so carelessly printed. It abounds with errors of a kind for which he is accountable. The division and pointing of the sentences is wretched. Not seldom a sentence is turned into contradiction or nonsense by the omission or interpolation of particles, or by the substitution for some principal word of another word utterly foreign to the meaning. Sometimes, by a partial resemblance in sound or typography, and the consideration of what the connexion seems to require, the reader can restore the right word. And these palpable instances of carelessness lead him to impute it to the Editor that many other sentences defy all conjectures of correction. How unaccountable is such negligence in the respectably endowed Editor, and warm admirer, of pieces which are likely from other causes to appear under many disadvantages. For it is, in the next place too apparent that the art of reporting was in a very imperfect state, or that of mutilating the reports in the publication in a prosperous one, at the period of these speeches. This is evident in the incomplete, inexplicit form in which many of the thoughts are here enounced; and still more in the disorderly abruptness of transition, and the want of consequence in the connexion too often manifest in the series of ideas.

It is to be observed that Mr. Grattan's is precisely the oratory to which such an imperfect exhibition does the greatest injury. It is obvious that an eloquence distinguished by vast and daring conception, by rapid transitions, by a logic sometimes not a little refined, though not attenuated by length in its trains, and all this conveyed or rather projected or flung, in a diction most original and peculiar, requires the utmost accuracy in the reporting, and will otherwise often appear extremely obscure. Great splendour may indeed be apparent, but in fragments and disconnexion, the splendour of a luminary reflected in agitated water.

Again, many of the topics belong so exclusively, not only to Irish affairs, but to temporary postures and incidents of those affairs, that the present race of readers, in England especially, will often feel both a deficiency of interest, and a very great difficulty even to comprehend. Various brief allusions to matters of consequence to the argument, and which would be instantly understood by the auditors are now, and here, obscure. If from the same brevity of reference to the speculations and theories agitated among the leading Irish politicians, we might judge of the intelligence of the mass of those auditors, we should be led to entertain a high idea of their quickness and their acquirements.

After all, this volume will be found to contain a large measure of clear, powerful, and brilliant eloquence. It is an eloquence most eminently distinguished by an intelligence comprehensive, sagacious, and incomparably active. That intelligence has such a velocity, vividness, and keenness of action, that the reader's imagination is continually haunted with the trite but noble simile of lightning. The fine passages do not, in the Ciceronian manner, regularly swell and expand into magnificence. Instead of this, the mind emits itself in powerful sudden impulses, and flashes which strike and instantly vanish. Propositions the most abstracted, and metaphors the most splendid and original, are uttered with an almost unequalled brevity. This orator, was assuredly never surpassed in the power of putting the whole essence of an

argument, the main *rationale* of a subject, in the concentrated form of a single thought or image. There is also a great *moral* force in his eloquence, from the infallible signs of sincerity which constantly distinguish it, and from a certain lofty character of austerity.

We had intended to introduce a number of extracts ; but as we may soon expect another volume, we will defer this indulgence till we shall obtain it.

[*March, 1813.*]

The Pilgrimage of Theophilus to the City of God. 8vo.

PERHAPS no unpardonable sin against good taste would be committed by a man, who should wish that the method of instructing mankind by protracted and complicated allegory, might be laid aside for ever. Indeed, separately from any judgment dictated by the laws of good taste merely and literary merit, there is a moral consideration, not entirely inapplicable to the subject:—it is, that the period and state of the world in which we are fallen, should have some influence on the choice of modes of written instruction. And if there is any fact, in the character of the present times, that peculiarly claims to have such an influence, it is this, that the attention and the time of the community are pressed upon by an extraordinary combination of urgent circumstances, which force people to be, for the most part, very busy and very anxious. We think that, in consideration of this fact, those who write to convey instruction, will do well to adopt, generally, the most direct and perspicuous methods, instead of obliging their readers to expend their efforts in following it through circuitous courses—to toil in pondering and guessing the import of visions and allegories—and often to feel that their labour has resulted, after all, in nothing like a clear addition to their knowledge, or beneficial effect on their will. If there be some readers disposed to be content on these terms, it is at least certain that the class for whom such a work as that before us would seem intended, cannot afford to be so employed.

This moral view of the matter assumes the inferior merits of extended allegory, as a mode of instruction. And in truth we suppose that almost all readers, so far as they reflect, have one conviction on this point. Every

one's experience testifies that it is inefficient and unsatisfactory, whether, considered in reference to the laws of allegorical writing, it be executed well or ill. Well executed, we suppose a long allegorical work will hardly be allowed to be called on easier conditions than these :— that the story shall be mainly constructed of objects and facts, and not be a mere dialogue of qualities personified ; that almost all the constituent matters of it, whether persons, actions, or scenery, shall be figurative and emblematical, the interior meaning being, to a considerable extent, carried, with analogical proportion, into even the ramifications and minutiae of the fable ; and that, at the same time, it shall be quite as complete, taken simply as a story, as if it had no such interior meaning. Now, to say nothing, in this case, of the writer, (though it would be much to be deplored that a better employment had not been found for the prodigious genius, and labour indispensable for the successful execution of this double and parallel work, each part of which is to be complete in itself, while the two parts are to maintain a perfect correspondence, so that wherever the reader stops to take an observation, he shall find himself to be at precisely the same point of the sensible world and of the speculative or moral world) to say nothing of the vast difficulty of such a performance, and the consequent probability of failure in almost every new attempt, it is evident that, supposing the attempt to *be* successful, in as high a degree as it is possible to conceive, the pretended moral purpose will be but slenderly effected. For one thing it is a perfectly known fact, that extremely few readers are of a disposition to be at any considerable pains to discover the supposed import of allegorical types, either where it is more recondite or where it is more obvious. But supposing them ever so intent on ascertaining it, and following it on, no undertaking on earth can be more hopeless, than that of detecting distinct moral significances in the indefinite multiplicity of particulars necessarily included in the construction of a complete story,—of getting acquainted with the rational souls supposed to be latent in the endless variety of forms

presented in the fictitious creation. By what previous exercises and proofs of his sagacity is any reader to assure himself, in entering on a long allegorical fable, that he shall readily and unerringly apprehend the moral import of, for example, the variety of the landscape views in the fabled region—of each of the enumerated kinds of trees, flowers, animals—of every edifice and its respective parts—of the diverse modes and colours of the draperies of the personages—and of all the actions of the animate and the rational beings represented? If it should be said that this is greatly overstating the requirements on his sagacity; for that very many of these particulars are not meant to be allegorical, that the author has not pretended to put any moral or speculative soul within a great portion of the sensible objects represented for the sake of the mere completeness and verisimilitude of the story; the reader's unfortunate situation is not at all mended. He now cannot know, probably in nine instances in ten, whether the forms presented to him are mere shadows or painted shapes, meant only to amuse, in passing, his eye and fancy, or veritable philosophers and moralists, whom it becomes him to approach, and salute with deference and inquiry. It will seem to him hardly a due respect to the genius and wisdom of the writer to assume, without consideration, that this, and the next, and that ten successive images, though he cannot discern any glimpse of the interior significance, are the mere play of poetry, or the proprieties or embellishments of picture. Yet, on the other hand, nothing could be more ridiculous than for him to be gravely detecting a hidden sapience of which the writer himself, the creator of the whole affair, never dreamed. Think then what a facile and enviable task this reader has on his hands. He has, at one and the same time if he pleases, or if he pleases it may be in succession, to contemplate the fable in its palpable and foremost quality of a complicated scheme of action and scenery; to ascertain which of the vast multitude of particulars great and small are allegorical, and which are not; and to draw out in a precise form the respective moral significance of

each and every one that he has discovered to have an important secret to tell. It is evident that if all this, or something near it, is not done, the pretended purpose of allegorical writing is not, as to the reader, accomplished; it is equally evident that all this, or any thing near it, will not be done by one reader in ten thousand; it is therefore evident, finally, that extended allegory, when executed even in the best manner, is, at least comparatively, a wretched misapplication of the writer's talents and labour. The *Fairy Queen* is beyond all question or comparison the grandest work in this department; and we may appeal to its readers whether they ever think of studying it as a system of moral philosophy. They would almost all confess that they read it for its marvellous adventures and exquisite descriptions; pleased, undoubtedly they will say, and perhaps profited, by the moral reflections momentarily presented here and there through an interval of the imagery, but so occupied and satisfied with the obvious and superficial magnificence of the scene, as rarely to think of any attempt at digging into the precious mines reported to be underneath. Now and then perhaps they are visited by a rather ungracious consciousness that they are not obtaining all that the work might yield to them; that they are even failing to obtain that which grave commentators, if not the author himself, may have professed to regard as the most valuable thing contained. They are perhaps excited to a slight attempt to develop the included wisdom; but they find that this breaks the fascination of the story, and that, besides, there is something in every stanza to baffle this moral inquest. They are uncertain whether the object before them is an emblem or not, or, if it be, what it means; they reflect, in excuse for their indolence, or in consolation for their dulness, that they can learn morality with much more precision at all events elsewhere; and they then return to the mighty performer, in a disposition to give him all due credit as a philosopher, but confessing that it is not for his lectures but his magic that they attend him.

If such be the inefficacy, for moral instruction, of

allegory in the most perfect state of execution it is ever likely to attain, it is hardly worth while to say a word about it as exemplified in a numerous tribe of clumsy performances; excepting indeed that in such performances it is often much more intelligible, as to its interior import, than it is in the *Fairy Queen*, and than it would be in *any* work of that high rank of genius; from this plain cause, that men of little genius or none are not masters of refined analogies and remote relations. A mind of Spenser's kindred, perceives so many relations real while not grossly palpable, between moral truth and the material world, as to be able to invest that truth, when putting it in the form of allegory, with a vast combination of various and unexpected symbols, all having some true relation to the subject, but not a few of them having so refined a relation, that their import cannot be obvious to the generality of readers. Inferior allegories, on the contrary, will be likely to take their emblematical figures from the narrow tract of coarse and obvious relations,—with the exception of now and then a far-fetched absurdity, obtained by a desperate effort for boldness and originality. Thus the reader is saved an immensity of trouble; he is forced into none of those wanderings of conjecture and exercises of ingenuity to which he would be doomed, in prosecuting the abstract import of a superior work, through its wilderness of visionary fancies, its endless crowds of emblematical forms. But then, he is precluded from that delight of the imagination, by which it is pretended to be the very purpose and value of allegory to recommend the otherwise too austere instructions of truth. He is to receive these instructions under the guise of a few ordinary figures, which instead of giving those truths the attractions of a new, and variegated, and animated vehicle, only force them into a less distinct, while it is not at all a more pleasing, mode of exhibition than their naked plainness would have been. Indeed a main device of ordinary allegorists, has been, as we have already hinted, to invest doctrines, virtues, and vices, with a personal being, by the great and creative process of giving them



a personal denomination, and then without more ado to set them a talking ; and Spenser amidst the arduous toils of his great performance, might have enviously fretted, if he could have foreseen with what facility *we* should be able to work an allegory to any required extent, by means of Mr. Proud-Spirit and Mr. Humble-Mind, Mr. Liberty and Mr. Self-Interest, and a countless generation of personages of all dispositions, occupations, sexes, and sizes, created with as much ease as Deucalion and Pyrrha made men by flinging pebbles backward over their heads.

The Pilgrim's Progress, a work of real though confined genius, partakes somewhat of the higher, and doubtless much of the inferior style of allegorical invention. Among religious readers it has obtained an established favour which no criticism would much contribute either to confirm or impair. It has acquired so much of a certain venerableness of antiquity and prescription, and is the object of a partiality so kind and extensive, among even children as an amusing story, and among their pious elders partly from its having been a favourite of their childhood, and partly because it supplies much religious instruction, that all modern works of similar object and construction necessarily appear under the greatest disadvantage. They are unavoidably brought in contrast with the old favourite, and the consequence is easily foreseen ;—so easily that we exceedingly wonder it does not deter all attempts at imitation. We think a little reflection would surely have convinced the well-meaning writer of the work before us, that if he had serious instructions to impart on different topics of religion from those exhibited in so lively a manner in the Pilgrim's Progress, it would be much better to offer them in a plain didactic form than in a humble imitation of that work. The imitation is not merely of that general kind, unavoidable in pursuing the figure of a spiritual pilgrimage. It is quite intentional and particular. There are the author's dreaming, the City of Destruction, Evangelist, the Wicket Gate, the Slough of Despond, the Castle of Giant Despair, (now descended, we are informed, by inheritance to Giant Infidelity,) the House of

the Interpreter, the Delectable Mountains, &c. &c. &c. We cannot enumerate these designations, so familiar to the readers of "Christian's" famous adventures, without repeating the expression of our disappointment that any person can have expected, in forcing these particulars into a new position and application, to preserve for them any thing like that interest which they have so often excited in their original places. And if the writer did not expect this, he ought to have considered that old friends, rendered unacceptable, are ten times more unwelcome than perfect strangers.

It must not be inferred from this servility of imitation, that there is absolutely no invention displayed in the work. There are a considerable number of new emblematical spectacles; and our impression of the commendable intention of the writer is so strong, that we should be very glad to be able to say that the elements and the construction of these emblems are according to those laws which must continue, in spite of the benevolence of criticism, to tyrannize over the art of writing. The adjudgment according to those laws, we fear, would be, that the figurative devices are constructed and connected without much ingenuity, and in neglect of all the rules of congruity and proportion. For instance, the Shepherds (representing Christian ministers) are summoned by blast of trumpet to come instantly in arms, and expressly for the purpose of war, to the top of the Mountain of Revelation. Why? Because a volcano (the French Revolution) has opened on the nearest land beyond the sea. We need not give any other example. A total want of perception with respect to figurative consistency is apparent throughout the performance. Some of the emblematical contrivances are puerile, and some are monstrous. Some of them are of such perfectly obvious conception, that they hardly throw the grace of a figure over the idea intended to be conveyed, and some are of such uncouth invention that the idea is absolutely concealed and lost in them. The story is composed of such materials that, taken literally as a descriptive narrative, it has little

resemblance to any real or possible series of facts and situations. Even the conversation parts, which might have been plainly doctrinal, have a certain sort of figurative crudeness which renders them almost as defectively instructive as the allegories; and the large portions of scripture forced in, are often rendered as little significant as divine language can be made to appear, by the awkward connexion, and in places where there does not seem to be any very specific doctrine for them to establish or illustrate.

The work furnishes a strong exemplification of the indiscretion of a man's too readily attributing to his mind the chameleon's faculty of looking distinctly in two directions at the same moment. He unwittingly undertakes to carry on two concerns of very different natures, but which are to be constantly advancing in a parallel progress, and, though distinct, are at every instant to correspond in a refined conformity, and, as it were, reflect each other in perfect analogy. But unfortunately he can attend to only one of them at once; and while that is elaborating the other falls into utter confusion: thus there is on the one side an incongruous series of pictured representations, and on the other a crude ineffective course of thinking. How much better would have been a short, plain, direct illustration of those evangelical sentiments, and those points of painful or happy Christian experience, which have evidently so deeply interested the writer's mind. It is the varying experience of a renovated spirit that is chiefly intended to be shadowed out, with an accompanying train of consolatory and cautionary instructions.

It is evident that no extracts of a length to be admitted within very narrow limits can give any adequate notion of the conduct of a protracted story; and if the critic's candour is questioned, it may always be denied that they give any competent specimen of the materials of which it is composed. To us the two or three following passages appear to be as fair samples as could be transcribed in so small a space.

* * * * *

It will perhaps be thought that even a considerably smaller portion of extract would have sufficed for the means of forming an estimate of the book, when we mention some of the names of the people introduced, in person or by reference, in the course of the narrative ; the chief of whom are Ladies Pleasure, Intemperance, and Doubting ; Sir Worldly-conformity ; Messrs. Carnal-mind, Love-the-World, Dread-of-Singularity, Evil-habit, Hate-good, Fear-of-man, Scoffer, Profane, Lukewarm, and Judgment ; Prisoners, Self-sufficiency, Self-deceiver, and Bond-will, fraudulently passing by the name of Free-will ; and Shepherds, Experience, Heavenly-mind, Lowly-mind, Watchful, Hireling, and Short-sight.

[April, 1813.]

An Address to the Public, on an important Subject, connected with the Renewal of the Charter of the East India Company. By ROBERT HALL, A.M. 8vo.

IT would be an unnecessary, and an officious labour, to go into a lengthened notice of a tract, so certain as this, to have an extensive circulation, so little capable, from the compression of its matter, of abridgement, and so little needing any commentary.

If any thing could effectually rebuke the madness of that false patriotism, (egotism in another and more self-deluded shape,) which extols every thing in English character and policy, as the very royalty of wisdom, justice, and magnanimity, one should think it would be the fact, that such an address as this can be pertinent, can be seriously necessary, at this time—an address which, as to its object, though not in its mode of pleading, might seem calculated for a state merging, with extremely partial, or rather incipient conviction, from Paganism, and far from being yet tranquillized from the agitation and affright, excited by the Christian innovation. But this observation may seem to imply, that the state of this country is the direct reverse of this description; and that therefore the necessity of such an address evinces not only something very wicked, but something utterly absurd and monstrous. This serves to show the deceptiveness of that habit of thought and speech, by which we take a nation as a great complex individual, and regard this collective being, as of this, or of that religion. We must resolve this great living mass into individuals; and the plain truth is, that though there are many Christians in our nation, it is but foolish to call it a Christian nation. An address like this may help, to-

gether with many other far more rigorous tests, in the way of discrimination. The necessity of it shows, that a very large proportion of the nation, though not coming under the denomination of Pagans, according to a very strict definition, have not any such knowledge of the true religion, and do not regard it with any such favour, as to feel the least horror of the grossest Heathenism, or the least disapprobation of the obstructions thrown in the way of the most peaceful, benevolent, and rational schemes for its expulsion from the earth. All such persons, if not properly Pagans, are just so much worse than Pagans, as they differ from them in opinions, and would support a system of delusions and abominations, in which they do not even believe. It may not be easy to fix on a term, exactly descriptive of this class of persons, and it is still more difficult to find a term sufficiently opprobrious; but at any rate, let them not be expostulated with as inconsistent *Christians*. There is no such connexion between them and Christianity, as to make it worth while to suspend and weaken, in observations on their inconsistency and absurdity, the full and ponderous condemnation of their depravity.

But can it be, that many of our countrymen are the just subjects of such a charge? The answer is, that if it be true, that the peaceful propagation of Christianity among our idolatrous subjects in the East, has been regarded with hostility, and very considerably opposed and obstructed by the arm of power, this charge falls on the majority of the people, who have a judgment and a will in this nation, or its ruling powers have not represented its prevailing and better moral character, but have felt and acted in the spirit of the smaller and the worse portion of the community. There is one passage in Mr. Hall's tract, which appears to assert the latter part of this alternative to have been the fact. After recounting, as contemporary with the illiberal conduct towards Indian missions the several institutions operating, with much popularity, and under high patronage, for the extension of the knowledge of the bible through the world, he says,

"When posterity shall compare the conduct we are reprobating with these facts, how great their astonishment to find the piety of the nation has suffered itself to lie prostrate at the feet of a few individuals, the open or disguised enemies of the faith of Jesus! It is impossible, in connexion with the circumstances to which we have adverted, to mistake the real sentiments of the British people, or not to perceive, that the illustrious associations already mentioned, are entitled, on a question of this nature, to be considered as its genuine and legitimate organ."—p. 23.

Now, though it is hardly possible to find language to estimate too low the measure of real disinterested favour, that the Christian religion, at any time, obtains from that class of mortals, who have the most power over the condition of the rest, yet we question the propriety of the compliment here paid, at the expense of a section of that class, to the piety of the nation, to "the real sentiments of the British people." It would be rather an excess of Christian compliance, to infer from subscriptions to the Bible and Bartlett's Buildings Societies, or even speeches for them, a national disapprobation of the temper manifested by the supreme authority (for it is idle to affect to rest the weight of the charge any lower) towards the undertakings for Christianizing the Hindoos; it would be too much complaisance, if the nation has shown no disposition to avail itself of the present occasion for avowing any such sentiments in a way bearing directly on the subject. A very considerable proportion of the British people; a portion, which it would be quite as fair to take, as it would be to take the members of the above-mentioned societies, as representative of the national mind, has just been pouring in petitions for changes in the Indian system; and, with one honourable exception, (we do not recollect to have heard of more) have these movers of amendment thought it worth while to say one word about the freedom of Christian enterprize in India!

In adverting to the two great societies, our author makes a brief, but splendid display of the combination of exalted characters they comprehend;—in the Bible Society "statesmen, nobles, and prelates, have enrolled their names, emulous of the honour of advancing to the utmost, the noble design of the institution;" "the Bart-

lett's Buildings Society includes in the list of its members every bishop, and every dignified ecclesiastic in the realm." The reference to these societies, with all this high patronage and co-operation, represents them as virtually declaring the national sentiment, with respect to a perfect freedom of religious exertions in India ; now, many of these elevated personages are the holders of a place in certain great assemblies, where it was their right, and we might have fancied their duty, to provoke an enquiry concerning the intolerance they are here assumed to have abhorred, and to propose those measures which it is here assumed they must have deemed to be demanded by justice, and even by decency, for the protection of the peaceable diffusion of Christian truth. When has this been done ? If this has not been done, is it not too evident, that the constituting of a part of those excellent societies does not necessarily imply any zealous hostility against the intolerant spirit that has been exhibited, with respect to Christianity in India ? and it would follow that, unless we could be guilty of the discourtesy, and the absurdity of supposing the most exalted portion of those associations to have less liberality and piety than the other members, the existence of those societies cannot be an evidence of any prevailing sentiment in the " British people" opposed to the intolerance in question.

Mr. Hall does not need to be informed, that very many persons who are willing to be numbered among the friends of those societies would have asked for no more satisfactory proof of its being even their duty to refuse all favour to the projects of Hindoo conversion, than that they were disliked by the powers paramount.

These slight observations are made from the conceived propriety of protesting against the employment, by the advocates of worthy and religious objects, of any expedients partaking of the nature of cajolery. We cannot help thinking, that in recent times, not a few of them have greatly offended in this way. It seems coming fast towards a legitimate practice, in the prosecution of some of these objects, to distribute round even gross personal adulation, and to return it, reciprocate it, and multiply

it in endless interchange. Services, comparatively easy, are magnified into munificence and heroism. And then for the nation, it really seems to be thought there is no possibility of exceeding the bounds of truth and decorum in the rhetoric of eulogy. But whatever applauses "the British people," regarded in its collective capacity, may have merited on other accounts, it would be better to take no notice of its claims relatively to the present subject. There is plainly no proof, we should think, afforded through any thing that can be taken as its "legitimate organ" or representative, of its having entertained any considerable anxiety for the freedom and success of the attempts in question, or indignation against the lofty authorities that have shown so little favour. Nevertheless, it will be sure to arrogate, *as a people*, the merit of both the origination and the success of these undertakings, when their results shall have attained a magnitude of which a nation may be proud. A nation, even of infidels, would be very capable of pluming itself on any signally able and triumphant achievements, in even the Christian cause, of the very men it might originally have driven ignominiously from its community, as wretched fanatics, not to be tolerated in the use of the air and sunshine of the same region of the globe.

If the individual and national flatteries, by which good men are come so much into the habit of reinforcing their better means of promoting religion, be really not grown to an excess which requires some such protest, we ought to be ashamed to have occupied these pages otherwise than with that brief indication to which we now proceed, of the arguments of this tract, of which there cannot well be a stronger general expression of praise, than that it is worthy of the writer.

One of the first matters in the address, is an explicit and unrestricted assertion of the principle of toleration, as applicable to the superstitions of our eastern subjects. Assuredly, the persons composing the Protestant missionary fraternities in India, are little likely ever to have the most distant idea of acting in contravention to this principle. They are too well satisfied of the final effi-

cacy of truth, enforced by an Almighty power, to have any disposition to prompt the government, (even if it were at all likely they should ever have any considerable degree of favour or influence with it) to any direct interference of power for the abolition of these superstitions. At the same time, our author cannot mean to assert the principle in an absolutely unlimited form, as perfectly clear of all questions and claims of moral legislation, discretion, and policy. It is easy to imagine, and even still more easy to cite from the records of fact, many such modes of superstition, as though matters of conscience with those that practised them, no wise or good man could wish a government to tolerate, if it had *power* enough to suppress them. Nothing was more really and solemnly a matter of conscience with the Mexicans, than their ripping open human beings alive, and cutting out their hearts, as offerings to Huitzilopochtli and Tezcatlipoka, (this is evinced in the strongest manner, in the narrative of Bernal Diaz) but we suppose no man* will reckon it among the crimes of the Spanish conquerors, that one of the first exertions of their cruelly acquired power, was to demolish the temples of these gods, and denounce to death the perpetrators of such worship. And though we are not informed of any thing quite so infernal as this in the pagan ritual of India, yet there are several practices, the positive appointments, or at least, the long established and venerated customs of the "national religion," authoritative therefore on the judgment and conscience of its devotees, which, we presume, the truest friends of religious liberty will, nevertheless, justify the government for putting down by force, at some future period, when it shall be strong enough. Has it not, indeed, been already applauded from its commencement in this line of operation, in the penal interdiction of the sacrifice of infants at Saugor? a practice, which the acknowledgment of some Brahmins, that it

* Excepting, perhaps, two or three wretched pagan pamphleteers of this country, who furiously raved, four or five years since, against the flagrant enormity in our missionaries, of presuming to preach against the "venerable and sacred institutions" of the Hindoo idolaters.

was not enjoined in the sacred books, did not suddenly cause to lose its religious hold on the minds of the multitude. And when the government shall sometime hereafter attain the power and courage to put an end, by peremptory enactment, to the burning of widows, or even to quell the furies and abominations of Juggernaut, we imagine the ineffable contempt of enlightened and humane persons, will be the reward of any declaimer, retrospectively against the *intolerance*, that shall have swept so much of the blackest remaining materials of hell from the face of the earth. Indeed, what is the object and use of every institution of civil government among mankind? If its absolutely primary objects must be acknowledged to be the establishment in splendour of what is termed a court, and the raising of taxes, we should think that next, at any rate, should be the concern of rendering effective throughout the community, a few of the most fundamental laws of natural morality, if we may use such a phrase,—such as that men should not (except in the honourable estate of war) be employed in cutting one another in pieces, and that they should not be allowed in such outrageous exhibitions of grossness, as must prevent the possible existence of decency, or any of the virtues akin to it, in the community. To allow such crimes and nuisances to protect themselves by the name of religion, would be like the barbarous and superstitious policy of a dark age, which in these countries, allowed marauders and murderers at once to find a sanctuary, and make a den in the churches. On this principle the priests of a heathen god have only to proclaim the divine approbation or requirement of any vice or crime it may be their taste to practise, or their interest to promote, in order to withdraw it at once from under the cognizance of the civil authority. To object here, as a plea for the impunity of the older and established immoralities of superstition, that this new promulgation would be a mere piece of wicked deception, would be trifling; a Christian, or a philosophic government, knows that the whole system is an accumulation

of deceptions; and this new one, coming out with all the authority of a class reputedly sacred, may have speedily taken possession of the belief and conscience of a credulous and depraved people,—which state of possession forms the only plea against an interference by force, with the longer established abominations.

Though the Author of the Address declares for toleration, he proceeds to observe, that it would be monstrous, and as impolitic as impious, in the authorities of this nation, to act as if they really preferred the Hindoo paganism, and to exhibit, in the sight of heaven and earth, the “extraordinary fact, that in a country, under the government of a people professing Christianity, *that* religion is the only one that is discountenanced and suppressed.” The Hindoos, he says, will but think the worse of us for our displaying among them that fine deistical liberality, (or, as we should think it might, with even more philosophical correctness, be denominated, atheistical) which regards all religions as equal. But here it is rather a question, whether we have given them just cause for any such bad opinion of us: they *may* know that we have shown, in several instances, very distinct indications of a disposition to restrain the dissemination of the Christian religion among them, and they *must* know that we have, in a direct and practical manner, patronized and encouraged their superstitions; for which, if they are not grateful, they are unworthy of the fraternity, and have little profited by the writings of a Major Scott Waring, whose warm feelings we recollect to have been poured out in eulogy of this pious munificence.

Notwithstanding the fanaticism of the Hindoos, Mr. Hall observes, they are practically tolerant, so that no danger of tumult and insurrection will attend the peaceable efforts of Christian teachers among them. This is confirmed by the impunity of the missionary exertions of former ages; by the proof of the falsehood of the wicked representations, that some late disturbances among them were partly the result of indignation at our schemes for

their conversion; and by the fact, that even the most zealous and proselyting Christians may be, as in the instance of Schwartz, very high in their favour.

He observes, it is now quite too late to dream of the suppression of the true religion in Hindoostan, it has already made too deep an inroad, and acquired too many native disciples, and even advocates; therefore,

"The only question which remains to be decided, is, whether its further propagation shall be left solely in the hands of the natives, or whether intelligent and respectable Europeans, who come more immediately into contact with the British government, and in whose prudence and experience greater confidence may be reposed, shall be allowed to superintend its movements. The good seed having struck its root too deep ever to be extirpated, the only alternative is, either to leave it to its spontaneous growth, aided by the labour of Hindoos, or to place it under a more skilful and enlightened cultivation."

The author briefly dwells on the benign and dignified operation of the Christian religion, as contrasted with the tendency and the palpable effects, intellectual and moral, of the Hindoo superstitions, and then asks,

"While the history of all times and nations evinces the inseparable alliance of impurity and cruelty with the worship of idols, is it consistent with the dictates of humanity, not merely to witness these enormities, without attempting to correct them, but to oppose the communication of the only remedy which is capable of effecting a cure?"

He then briefly adverts, with great animation and energy, to the indications of prophecy, to the present symptoms of a peculiar crisis in the moral world, and to the impotent and foolish presumption of a conduct, which would be no other than an attempt to "contravene the purposes of the Most High."

"The Master of the universe is now addressing the greatest potentates in the language of an ancient oracle:—'Be wise now, ye kings, be instructed, ye judges of the earth.' Encompassed as we are with the awful tokens of a presiding and avenging Providence, dissolving the fabrics of human wisdom, extinguishing the most ancient dynasties, and tearing up kingdoms by the roots, it would be the height of infatuation any longer to oppose the reign of God, whose purposes will pursue their career, in spite of the efforts of human policy, which must either yield their co-operation, or be broken by its force."

After insisting forcibly on the infallible operation of Christianity, as far as it shall progressively be effectually

communicated to our heathen subjects in the East, to render them grateful and faithful to our government, and suggesting that this, considered on the mere ground of policy, derives additional importance from the jealousy and envy with which our powerful European enemies regard our eastern acquisitions, and the persevering eagerness with which they will look out for any means of competition or mischief in that quarter,—Mr. Hall makes some reflections on “the probable intention of Providence in opening so extensive a communication betwixt Europe and the most ancient seats of idolatry, and more especially in subjecting such immense territories in the East to the British arms.” And, he says, “we can conceive no end more worthy of the Deity in these momentous changes than to facilitate the propagation of true religion.” He lightly scouts any such fancy, if it were possible any one should entertain it, as that the marvellously rapid extension of our conquests and power in India, here traced in a brief and glowing description, is the consequence of a blind predilection and favouritism in the Supreme Governor to this country and its grandeur, as it is called,—“a motive too puerile to satisfy the requisitions of human reason, much more to limit the views of an eternal mind.” An awful responsibility attends a trust of such surpassing magnitude as a “direct dominion over fifty millions, and a paramount influence over a hundred millions of men ;” and the writer fairly acknowledges that the extension of our power has been in some respects highly beneficial to them ; “but why,” he asks, “in the series of improvements, has Christianity been neglected ? Why has the communication of the greatest good we have to bestow, been hitherto fettered and restrained ; and while every modification of idolatry, not excepting the bloody and obscene orgies of Juggernaut, has received support, has every attempt to instruct the natives in the things which belong to their peace been suppressed ? It will surely appear surprising to posterity, that a nation, glorying in the purity of its faith as its highest distinction, should suffer its transactions in the East to be characterized by a spirit of

infidelity, as though it were imagined that the foundations of empire could be laid only in apostacy and impiety; at a moment too, when Europe, convulsed to its centre, beholds these frantic erections, swept with the "besom of destruction."—The word "neglected," in the first sentence of this extract, is perhaps employed somewhat inadvertently, in connexion with what is precisely the object of the Address; for it is not asked of the government to do any thing *positive* toward the diffusion of Christianity: in another place Mr. Hall says, "whether it be consistent with sound policy for the British government to employ any part of its resources in aid of the cause of Christianity in India, is a question which it is not necessary to discuss, while its friends confine their views to a simple toleration, and request merely, that its teachers may not be harassed and impeded in their attempts to communicate instruction to the natives." p. 15.

It will be permitted to interpose one or two slight remarks. In the passage just quoted, Mr. Hall reprehends the "nation" for "*suffering* its transactions in the East to be characterized, &c., &c." Certainly the nation deserves, as we have already shown, very little credit for Christian zeal; but had it been ever so zealously affected concerning the subject in question, has the writer, or will the readers of the Address have, a very precise conception how the nation could have *prevented* the alleged evil? By what mode of authority could it interpose? Is not our author perfectly aware that any even the most distant approach towards such doctrines as an invidious comment might deduce from this word "suffer," however fashionable such doctrines might once have been, among a race of stronger spirits, in an age of heroes and philosophers, has been of late years regarded and avoided with extremest horror, especially by the people of theology?

Again, it is fair to remark that several of our author's expressions, apparently asserting a *total suppression* of all efforts to impart to the people of India the true religion, are rather too unqualified. The condition of this great enterprise is ungracious enough; no avowed co operator

in the cause is permitted to go out in an English ship ; some of its worthiest and most active labourers were, some years back, very greatly obstructed and restrained ; and to this hour their residence, and the prosecution of their object, in the British Indian dominions, have been continued on mere precarious sufferance ; they are thus the subjects, in truth the slaves, of an arbitrary discretion, dependent on the temper and the changes of a local government, in a great degree necessarily despotic, and *not* necessarily very religious, at least in the old restricted and exclusive sense of the term religion among us. Certainly this is a condition bad enough, for one of the best things in the world to be placed in by the ruling powers of what professes to be the very best, and by many degrees the best, nation in the world. But nevertheless, under all these circumstances of uncertainty, hazard, and grievance, the missionary operations have, in point of fact, been actively carried on, and without much vexatious interference, for a considerable time past.

Another remark is, that though it would have been quite out of place for Mr. Hall to take account, in this address, of any considerations purely political or financial, yet, as it is desirable to avoid any thing that may *in effect*, however undesignedly, aid popular delusion, it is to be wished that, in celebrating the envied magnificence of our Indian acquisitions, he had thrown in some cooling and cautionary expression to remind or apprise his readers, that this so vaunted and so envied a series of triumphs has been, as to the welfare of this nation, but a melancholy and destructive glory. May the final benefit of the conquest to the natives be an adequate counterbalance, in the general account of the interests of the human race, to the great, and as yet unmeasured and unfinished mischief inflicted by it on both the moral and the financial welfare of this country. But it is not improbable that a considerable number of the readers of this address, elated still with the pomp and blazon of oriental empire, may not even yet have learnt, from all the evidence of late years brought in so palpable a form

and through such comparatively familiar channels, that it would have been a fortunate thing as regarding the interests of this nation exclusively, if all the attempts to pass the Cape of Good Hope had been actually repelled by some more tremendous and efficient spectre than that which the Portuguese poet feigns to have risen, with interdictive menaces, to the view of De Gama.

The next portion of the pamphlet is employed in showing that liberty of conscience means, not so much that freedom of private opinion which indeed no government can prevent, as the absence of all restraint in the *communication* of opinions. The concluding pages are bestowed on that notion, advanced a few years back by several of the enemies of the Indian missions, but especially by the not yet forgotten Major, in terms of abuse and rage, that Christians have at this day no right to entertain the apostolic sentiments of enmity to heathenism, and adopt the apostolic enterprises of conversion, because they are not like the apostles, possessed of miraculous powers for giving efficacy to truth. It would really not have been thought that so foolish a cavil had force enough in it to be capable of being refuted with such acuteness of argument and felicity of illustration. It appears to us the ablest part of the performance, and if the whole were not so easy to be obtained, we should be gratified in transcribing the last three or four pages.

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[June, 1813.]

The Life and Administration of Cardinal Wolsey. By JOHN GALT. 4to.

It is not very easy to conjecture what class of readers it is designed to attract or please, by a new and costly work on the subject of this volume. Undoubtedly, a fine new book has considerable recommendation in the mere fact of its novelty, and what may be called its corporeal elegance; but that there can be at this time, within this realm, twenty persons who are anxious for any further information concerning Cardinal Wolsey, than what is to be found in our popular histories, with the addition of the entertaining memoir of him by Cavendish, as now correctly edited by Dr. Wordsworth, is more than we find it easy to believe,—and if it were proved, would be more than could easily be accounted for. The substantial estimate of his character is perfectly settled; nor will his present or any future historian be able to modify it, in any degree that shall be worth the writing or the reading of a quarto volume. While so much praise would have been due to the industry of research exercised by the present writer, had it been in pursuit of some useful and necessary object, it is grievous to see it wasted in such complete misapplication. Readers that want a lively exhibition of the man, reduced in a certain degree from the dimensions of the official and political character which occupied so vast a space in Europe—an exhibition of the most palpable and personal distinctions of temper, manners, equipage, and immediate social economy—are not to expect ever to obtain any material additions or corrections to the delineation, from the life, by the Cardinal's gentleman-usher, or any thing at all approaching, in the interest of the *style* of representation, to the animated honest

simplicity of this antique biographer. Even if a toilsome examination of old documents *could* make the addition of a few particulars quite as curious as any in his history, or could substitute for any part of it a more accurate or explanatory statement, the improvement would fail of its due effect in the minds of readers pre-occupied by his relation,—which all persons may be presumed to be who have any kind of curiosity about the life and character of the Cardinal. When a memoir, so considerably full and comprehensive as his, is written with an intimate personal acquaintance, with an evident principle of veracity, with a deep interest in the subject, and yet but a moderate degree of prejudice in its favour, and in a natural, feeling, and vigorous style; it takes possession of the public mind, and fixes in the imagination a picture with which we are satisfied, and to which we become so partial that we never suffer it to be replaced by any other, and are fully as much disturbed as pleased by any attempt to modify, under the name of correcting or finishing, any of its features or accessory circumstances. And such a representation requires a still more decided and invincible establishment in the public mind, if it is corroborated by our most favourite national poetry, if it associates in the mind, by a conformity of fact and some congeniality in pathos and antique expression, with the delineations of Shakspeare. If it should happen that a man's historical researches have really furnished him with information, which he thinks would greatly augment the value of such a memoir, either by enlargement or rectification, he will naturally be unwilling to forego the credit of displaying what he knows; and it may be very well for him to bring out his acquisitions in some such form as notes or appendix to the established work; in which form they will be received with gratitude by the few accurate inquirers into history, and will be tolerated, in the way of being overlooked, by the mass of readers. But as for writing all over again the life of Wolsey for the general benefit of the readers of Cavendish,—no task or penance in literature could be more thankless.

And then as to his political history: his despotic

government, for a season, of England and its proud monarch, his bold investigations and judicature of the church, his negotiations and influence with the great continental states, his intrigues for the papacy, and the causes of his fall,—all these are among the conspicuous and familiar matters of the history of England and Europe during that period. They do not require to be placed in any other, and can hardly be placed in any clearer light, than that in which they have now been beheld a far longer time than any of us has lived. But whether they were meant to be placed in another light, or only more prominently brought out in the same, it could not be effected, with a due regard to the relations and proportions of things, on any easier terms than those of writing a good portion of an age of the general history of Christendom. A political history of the Cardinal, attempted to be exhibited exclusively of this large and complicated system of interests and transactions, would be but like a crevice that should admit us to see a part of the construction and action of one of the chief wheels in a vast machine; or like some of the bare ribs of the wreck of a ship. His history must be a comprehensive view of the politics of Europe; and if that view is to be the same as that which is familiar to us in our established histories, it comes quite unnecessarily; if very materially different, it comes quite too late.

Undoubtedly, we may conceive the possible existence of a human mind, that, surveying the age of Wolsey, should form, in the united capacities of philosopher and Christian, a more comprehensive and simplified, a more luminous and instructive estimate of those times, and of Wolsey and the other great actors, than has ever yet been displayed. We know not, however, whether those times more need or deserve the illustrations which such a profound and sanctified intelligence could give to *any* times, than several other periods of history: but at any rate, the present author is not the man. We must make small account indeed of the religious good sense, or the statesman-like knowingness, or the philosophical acuteness and comprehension, which have been expended on

the character and the period, if the public are to be congratulated on receiving a new historical examen, from a writer who is very apt to mistake, sometimes, a certain conceited singularity, and sometimes elaborate commonplace, for philosophical remark and generalization; who has much yet to learn, we think, in the art of giving prominence and congruity to the delineation of a great character, or compactness to a multifarious history; who carries himself, nevertheless, with an air of the utmost self-sufficiency; who shows some signs which are not to be interpreted according to customary rules, if they do not betoken an irreligious disposition; who is, however, willing to make amends for any imputable levity of feeling or defect of faith in religion, by a perfectly grave endeavour to restore to their deservedly high place in public estimation the precious sciences of astrology and alchemy; who, finally, with the same rectitude of judgment and efficacy of means, aspires to transmute into moral gold, into an image as splendid and as lofty as that on the plain of Dura, that huge, worthless, unsightly bulk of dross, Cardinal Wolsey's character; and is apparently simple enough to expect to make us fall down and worship—without the aid of Nebuchadnezzar's famous expedient of persuasion.

This last circumstance, this whimsical attempt at canonization, is the leading peculiarity of the book. If we accept Mr. Galt's representation, the general and established opinion of Wolsey's character must be an unequalled instance of historical injustice, or Protestant malice. If any one is ignorant of this settled estimate, and more disposed to pay two guineas for this new book, than a trifle more for the work of Burnet, or Rapin, he may be instructed that Wolsey was not only one of the ablest (for there can be no question or discussion about his talents), but one of the most upright, public-spirited, and wisely munificent men that ever interfered in the management of national affairs—worthy of all the elevation he attained, and worthy that his fall, like the sudden prostration of a colossus or a tower, should have crushed all who were contributing to it or desiring it.

And how is this representation made out? Is it by large disclosures of new evidence? or by denying the facts on which the prevailing judgment is founded? or by original and refined reasonings to show that opposite inferences ought to have been drawn from those facts? No: the substantial matters of fact are, indeed inevitably, just the same in this as in former records; nor are they subjected to any laborious process of jesuitical chemistry to make them yield a different result. The business is done for the cardinal by plain arbitrary assertions in his favour, thrown in here and there throughout the narration, and by a general gilding or varnish of laudatory epithets.

To be sure nothing can be more dull, than prosing and invective on the vanity of ambition, the folly of depending on the favour of monarchs, and the vices and errors of prosperous men. And if Mr. Galt had, amidst his perverseness, betrayed something of the vigour, the originality, the ingenuity of some of the noted lovers of paradox, the Rousseaus and the Warburtons, we might have been amused, while yet regretting so unprofitable an employment of talent, to see one more wayward freak of genius (rash however beyond all preceding example), in the attempt to transform so notorious, so firmly and minutely delineated a character of history as Wolsey. But such a wantonness of genius must have attempted its object partly at least in the way of invalidating records, or extorting from them a different testimony from what they have been usually understood to give, or qualifying their evidence into doubtfulness and confusion. As Mr. Galt has forborne such an operation, and, accepting the facts as told by former historians, has consented to repeat the story in a way which proves the profligacy of his hero, it is surely a strangely foolish and ill supported whim, to bedizen, with the terms appropriate to excellence, a character confessedly formed from such materials. Wolsey's whole career manifests a boundless ambition as the reigning quality of his character. It wrought and raged in his mind almost to insanity; and there was no interest of earth or heaven, which he was not ready to sacrifice to it. Now if Mr. Galt could not coincide with

the oracles of religion, and with the maxims of the higher schools of moral philosophy, in reprobating, for a leading principle of action, a passion which is essentially a gross and direct mode of selfishness, and is sure to become by indulgence furiously insatiable, and to drive its slave towards all manner of iniquity, with the unremitting activity of a possessing demon; and if he could not bring himself to pronounce an emphatical sentence of condemnation on the Cardinal for surrendering himself to be actuated by this evil spirit,—though this sentence is pronounced even by historians not pretending to any high refinements of religious and moral principle; if Mr. Galt could not do this, he might at least have forborne any thing like applause. He might simply have acknowledged the unquestionable fact of the Cardinal's being immensely ambitious, and let alone the sentence on its merits. But no: our author is too independent and bold for that. He will directly declare in favour of ambition as a noble principle of action. He acknowledges, indeed, that it will not sanctify all means that may be employed for the gratification of the passion; but the general strain of his language assumes that the Cardinal was clear on this ground. The monstrous excess of the Cardinal's vanity and ostentation, his childish passion for parade and tinsel, while their exhibitions are passing before the biographer, seem rather to have on him that imposing effect which was felt by the humble gazers at his Eminence's pageantry, than to excite either his contempt or his compassion. Even the wretched impolicy, so like fatuity, of Wolsey's systematically haughty treatment of the English nobility, appears very little to qualify Mr. Galt's admiration of his wisdom. Nor is he reproved for his want of discernment in expecting that a foreigner, an Englishman, of low origin, of arrogant temper, and unlimited ambition, could ascend the papal throne, with all the Italian, the Spanish, the French, and the Imperial churchmen and potentates looking complacently at the feat. The vigour and severity of the ecclesiastical part of his administration, are celebrated in a style as if it were impossible any meaner sentiment than

abhorrence of clerical corruption could be concerned, in an inquisition which brought him an ample revenue of fines, compositions, or confiscations. His own gross immorality is treated as gently as if he had shown his biographer his cards of indulgence, duly signed and paid for, and convinced him of their validity. There is no censure, that we recollect, of the Cardinal's faithful remembrance of all personal offences till the proper moment for effectually repaying them. Few of the commonplaces which are not sparingly administered, are wasted in doing justice to that integrity of the minister, which even Cavendish, with all his kind and regretful partiality, has yet described in the remarkable sentence, "Readiest in all the council to advance the king's only will and pleasure, *having no respect to the cause.*" Though Mr. Galt has words of very little indulgence for what he holds contemptible in character, they are not forthcoming at the deplorable meanness of the humiliation by which Wolsey, when he found himself falling, endeavoured to propitiate the offended and unfeeling tyrant. Nor is any drawback made from the ample tribute paid to his zeal for the promotion of knowledge, his "vast and prospective comprehension," and the "foreseeing faculties of his genius," on account of his last message of advice to Henry, uttered in the very hour of death, exhorting the king to exercise his vigilance and power against the commencing efforts towards a reformation in England. As to his habitual neglect and violation of religion, regarded as a concern distinct from all ecclesiastical institutions and ceremonies, a direct concern between the human spirit and its Creator, we are really become so accustomed to the utter inattention to any such matter as this in modern historians, that Mr. Galt's taking no serious cognizance of it, even in the life of an ecclesiastic, notwithstanding he did himself make a melancholy and most memorable reference to it near his end, almost fails to strike us as a defect in the work. And indeed the subject is quite as well let alone by writers who have no impression of its importance, and do not even care to understand it. It is enough for the

present author to observe, after reciting the Cardinal's well-known expression, "Had I served God as diligently as I have done the king, he would not have given me over in my grey hairs—"

"This sentiment seems to be common to fallen ministers. When Samrah, the governor of Bussorah, was deposed by Maoujah, the sixth Caliph, he is reported to have said, "If I had served God as well as I served him, he would not have condemned me;" and Antonio Perea, the favourite of Philip the Second, of Spain, made a similar complaint."—p. 264.

Yet, as matter of some little curiosity, it might, perhaps, have been wished by some readers, that the author had gone a sentence or two further, to signify whether he considered this famous sentiment as merely a thing prettily, pensively, and poetically in character, for a great fallen actor, or as a perfectly rational conviction and alarm in the view of truths and facts inexpressibly awful.

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We need not say we do not mean to represent the book before as of no value whatever. That cannot fairly be said of any historical composition which relates, with reasonable correctness, the same curious or important facts that have been related on unquestioned authority before. But each new narrator is prone to admit the deceptive notion, that the general settled kind of interest which has for ages been felt, but is now no longer vividly felt, in the well known history of remarkable national events and personages, will be reanimated into a new specific interest as soon as *he* shall repeat the story. Because he does not employ the identical words of former historians, the effect shall be as if those historians, and all they had said, had suddenly passed out of memory: as if a baker, by making his loaves of a peculiar shape, should expect to render bread itself, as coming from his oven, somewhat of a stimulant novelty, and to bring all the people of the district to his shop. The writer is disposed to attribute to himself at least as much power to excite curiosity and appetite, as a man who should contrive to raise a plantation of bread-fruit and cabbage-trees, in a country where bread and

cabbages had always before been produced in a very different way.—In the present instance, however, it should seem that even Mr. Galt, evidently an adventurer of great self-complacency and assurance, was somewhat doubtful whether, even aided by the capital novelty of of the Ethiop made white, a *mere* history of Wolsey and his times would now be likely to obtain much favour; for he has seized all occasions of introducing extraneous matters, sometimes in a measure, and sometimes not at all, related to the business of the narration. We are favoured, for instance, with a picture of the state of society in the times immediately subsequent to Charlemagne—the story of Peter the Hermit—details of the feudal system—descriptions of the state of Ireland—but, above all, with delectable glimpses of the occult sciences. The grave introduction of this last topic was really a magnanimous venture for *eclat*. There would be some chance for a book which should make it probable, at last, that he is, potentially, the richest man, who happens, by purchase or theft, to be owner of the largest quantity of lead; that the time may not be far off, when it will be requisite to appoint a strong nightly guard to prevent the taking up of our water pipes, and the plundering of the roofs of churches and aristocratic mansions, for a substance which would raise the petty thief into a Nabob; that the plumbs in our clocks may pass into the form of gold watches; that even the weights on the counters of a huckster's shop may make at least temporary gentlefolks of the occupiers; and that governments will have the option of making the national lead into bullets to shoot the enemy, or into guineas to pay off their debt and discharge the people from taxes. The only difficulty unprovided for, seems to be that of keeping up the present value and commercial power of gold, when a sprinkling of the “powder of projection,” the amount of a pinch of snuff, shall be competent any time to turn the pig into ingots. But perhaps this difficulty will be obviated by means of the other grand branch of occult science, by which the stars are to be constituted a Privy Council.—Seriously, we would not

be understood to say that Mr. Galt is positive we shall, one of these days, acquire the power of making gold ; but he really seems to think it not unlikely ; and gravely and circumstantially repeats a number of the most foolish stories that ever sported with ignorant credulity. As to the influence of the stars on human characters and events, and the possibility of detecting their dispositions and designs respecting us, he seems to have no doubt.

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[*September and October, 1813.*]

Memoirs of John Horne Tooke, interspersed with original Documents.

By ALEXANDER STEPHENS, Esq., of the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple. 8vo.

THAT eager desire which the decease of very distinguished men so commonly excites among the inquisitive part of the community, to obtain ample memoirs of their lives and illustrations of their opinions and characters, must have been greatly repressed with respect to the very extraordinary individual who is the subject of these volumes. There cannot but have been a very general conviction, that it was as much in vain to expect a really faithful history and impartial estimate of him as of Oliver Cromwell or the French Revolution. Even if such a book were to appear, it is probable it would have but few approving readers. In the minds of a very large proportion of reading Englishmen, the name of Horne Tooke awakens ideas of almost every thing hateful or dreadful in politics and morals. A more moderate class, though giving him some considerable credit for honesty of intention, and superiority to the lowest sort of self-interested motives—adopting too, to a limited extent, the principles on which he waged his political wars, and regarding him with something of that kindness which we are disposed to indulge toward men in adversity—feel nevertheless such disgust at some of the connexions in which he acted at some periods of his career, at the inconsistency of his character with his spiritual profession while he exercised it, and at that later licentiousness of which his irreligion tended to secure him from being ashamed, that they cannot with any complacency hear him praised, while they see and despise the injustice of that undiscerning and unmixed opprobrium with which they hear him abused. There

may be a small party ready to make light of all his faults and vices, and to extol him as the mirror of integrity, an apostle of liberty, a model of orators, a prince of philosophers.—Not one person, probably, of these different classes will ever alter his opinion of this remarkable character. The subject is old, the impression has long been made and settled, and just according to that impression will the biographer's performance be pronounced upon, instead of the impression itself being changed by the biographer's representations.

Though we should be glad, certainly, that there *were* any chance of our ever obtaining, however unavailing it might be for rectifying public opinion, a perfect life of this extraordinary man—a work written by a contemporary, endowed with great sagacity, a rational lover of liberty, a zealous friend of learning, and a true disciple of Christianity, and privileged, if such a man could have been so, with a long personal acquaintance with his subject—yet we can make ourselves tolerably content under the certainty that such a work will never appear. The subject in question will not long continue to excite any considerable interest. There is a vast number of things the world can afford to forget. The train of events and of transiently conspicuous personages is passing on with such impetuous haste, and the crowd of interesting or portentous appearances is so multiplying in the prospect, that our attention is powerfully withdrawn from the past: and there is something almost melancholy in considering how soon men of so much figure, in their time, as Horne Tooke, and even his greater contemporaries, will be reduced to the diminished forms of what will be regarded with the indifference, almost, of remote history.

In the mean time, we might be tolerably satisfied with the information conveyed in the present work, if it were not so unconscionably loaded with needless matters. The author, though too favourable to his subject, is however much nearer to impartiality than probably any of the enemies of that subject will ever be, in recording the life, or commenting on the principles.

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The work begins with the introduction of names which some ingenuity might be thought requisite to connect with the subject, if we were not aware that writing biography is an undertaking of such very questionable legitimacy, as to make it, in setting off, highly politic, in order to get fairly and unobstructed into the course, to stun and quell the prepared cavillers with the imposing sound of such names as Plutarch, Tacitus, Bossuet, and "our own Bacon Lord Verulam."* Several pages are then employed on the object, apparently, of showing that the rank to be assigned, in biography, to distinguished talents, should not depend on the aristocratic or plebeian descent of their possessor. The author manages this topic so laboriously as to excite some little suspicion that he would, after all, have been better pleased to tell that his subject, John Horne, was the son of a duke, than that he was the son of a poulterer in Newport Market. A paragraph like the following does not exemplify exactly the right way of effecting what it appears intended for.

"A tradition still exists in the family, that their ancestors possessed great wealth, and were settled on their own lands at no great distance from the metropolis. A more ingenious biographer, by a plausible reference to county histories, might have been able, perhaps, to have traced their origin to a pretty remote period, and, with a little reasonable conjecture, it would have been easy to have ascertained the loss of the patrimonial estates during the wars between the rival Roses. Or the industry of a modern genealogist might have contrived, from the identity of names, in addition to some trivial and incidental circumstances, to have shed the lustre of episcopacy on their race, and, by means of Dr. George Horne, Bishop of Norwich, reflected a borrowed renown on his new relatives. But such arts, even if allowable, are unnecessary here; for the grammarian, who forms the subject of the present volumes, is fairly entitled to be considered as a *noun substantive*, whose character and consequence might be impaired, rather than increased, by the addition of any unnecessary adjunct."

As to the latter of these supposed expedients for conferring adventitious consequence on that proud "substantive," we should have thought that no one who had

* When will writers learn to sweep their pages clear of idle expletives?

been a personal observer of his moral temperament, could have entertained the idea, long enough to put it in words, of importance being added to him by even a real relationship to the Bishop of Norwich, without being rebuked by the image of that bitterly sarcastic look with which the said "substantive" would have heard any such suggestion.

He was born on the 25th of June, 1736. Whatever other reasons he might have for complacency in his parentage, there was one that could not fail to be always peculiarly gratifying to him. His father's premises were contiguous to those of Frederick, Prince of Wales, the father of the present King. The officers of the Prince's household thought it would be a great convenience to them to have an outlet to the street through a certain wall which belonged to the poulterer. Without ceremony therefore they ordered a door-way to be broken in it, and paid no attention when he went to remonstrate. He at last boldly appealed to the law, and found its administration upright enough to defend him against the encroachment. Being, however, zealously attached to the house of Brunswick, he had no sooner obtained this decision than he handsomely gave the Prince the desired accommodation.

John, being a favourite and a boy of promise, was placed at Westminster school, and afterwards, for five or six years, at Eton ; where, however, it has not been discovered that he gained any literary honours, or made any efforts to gain them. There are traces of evidence, nevertheless, of great prematurity. "On interrogating," says our author, "an old lady, with a view of discovering if any thing remarkable had occurred during his childhood, I happened to ask, whether she had known Mr. Horne Tooke when a boy." "No !" was the reply, "he never was a boy ; with him there was no interval between childhood and age ; he became a man all at once upon us !"

He is believed to have become a diligent student at college, where he passed several years ; and whence he removed to undertake, to the great surprise and regret of

his biographer, the office of usher in a school at Blackheath.

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It was at the "earnest request of his father, who was a zealous member of the church of England, that he entered, at length into holy orders, and was ordained a deacon. It was not till a subsequent period that he qualified himself for holding preferment by passing through the usual ceremonies incident to the priesthood." And in the interval between the two points in his progress, and after he had made a commencement as a curate, he entirely abandoned all clerical intentions, and determined to enter on the law.

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At the Inns of Courts he had for contemporary students and familiar associates Dunning and Kenyon, the one of whom was afterwards to be his defender and the other his judge, but whose more prosperous fortunes in subsequent life could not then have been prognosticated on any ground of family, or talent, or literary attainment. In this last particular both are asserted to have been very greatly his inferiors. And, to judge of their command of money by their *almost* rival frugality, we may conclude they were all under an equal necessity of submitting to calculate their future successes solely on their abilities and exertions. In the point of frugality it should be mentioned that there was a small difference in favour of the individual who was so very eminent for that virtue in later life.

"I have been repeatedly assured, by Mr. Horne Tooke, that they were accustomed to dine together, during the vacation, at a little eating-house, in the neighbourhood of Chancery-lane, for the sum of sevenpence halfpenny each. 'As to Dunning and myself,' added he, 'we were generous, for we gave the girl who waited on us a penny a-piece; but Kenyon, who always knew the value of money, sometimes rewarded her with a halfpenny, and sometimes with a promise!'"

But in spite of his strong inclination to the law, the singular adaptedness of his powers for the most successful prosecution of it, this formal preparation for it, and this companionship with some of the most fortunate of

its young proficient. Horne was the captive, beyond redemption, of another destiny.

"His family, which had never sanctioned this attachment," (to the law) "deemed the church far more eligible as a profession, and he was at length obliged to yield, notwithstanding his reluctance, to the admonitions, the entreaties, and the persuasions, of his parents. It seems not at all improbable that a friendly compromise took place on this occasion; and that an assurance was given of some permanent provision, in case he consented to relinquish his legal pursuits.

"Accordingly, in 1760, Mr. Horne was admitted a priest of the church of England, by Dr. John Thomas, Bishop of Sarum; and in the course of the same year he obtained the living of New Brentford, which was purchased for him by his father."—"It is said to have produced between £200 and £300 *per annum*. This income he enjoyed during eleven years, and in the course of that period he not only did duty at Brentford, but also preached in many of the churches of the metropolis."

In 1763, he was prevailed upon to become what he was accustomed to denominate a *bear-leader*, that is, the travelling tutor of a young gentleman. With a son of the famous Elwes he passed more than a year in France, with vastly higher gratification, no doubt, than any that could have been afforded by the occupations of a parish priest. It is not, however, to be understood that he scorned all the proprieties of his profession. We may transcribe without being bound to feel any great reverence for the biographer's judgment in theology, his account of Mr. Horne's clerical ministrations.

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We need not remark on the extreme ignorance betrayed in a passage which represents a man as avoiding controversial points, and keeping clear of mystery by—confining himself to "the truths contained in the Scriptures, and the received opinions of the Anglican church!"

But whatever may be thought of that portion of Horne's services to his people which he performed under a solemn ecclesiastical obligation, he claims the most animated praise for what he did *beyond* the terms of this obligation. "He actually studied the healing art, for the express purpose of relieving the complaints of such as were unable to pay for the assistance of an apothecary.

To attain this end he carefully studied the works of Boerhaave, and the best practical physicians of that day; and having learned to compound a few medicines, he formed a little dispensary at the parsonage-house, where he supplied the wants of his numerous and grateful patients." It is added, that "he was accustomed, at times, to plume himself on the cures he had performede and often observed, 'that though physic was said to be a problematical art, he believed that his medical were far more efficacious than his spiritual labours.'"—Sufficient care, however, was taken that these occupations should not trench on the time and attention due to the "Rule and Exercise" of gentility and fashion. He was fond of gay company; and as some slight drawback from the praises earned in his theological and medical capacity, it is in the softest, gentlest form of blame acknowledged, "that he was, at one period, accused of being too fond of cards, and of spending too much of his time at ombre, quadrille, and whist." The biographer did not think himself called upon to tell that the clergyman used to spend the Sunday afternoon in this canonical employment, with a preference, for honesty's sake, of a room looking to the street, and with every kind of blind removed from the windows. But then what an excellent chance we have of knowing, from biographers, all that is material to an estimate of men's characters. Friends will not make plain confessions of things which we know not whether we ought to believe when asserted in the accusations of enemies.

Our author observes that a man of Mr. Horne's opinions might perhaps have been expected to "lean to the Dissenters," on account of the more republican cast of their church economy, and their entertaining a spirit favourable to civil liberty. No. He deemed the gradation of ranks in the national establishment well calculated for the production, as well as the reward, of "merit and virtue;" and,

"Notwithstanding the charges afterwards adduced against him, on the score of orthodoxy, no one was *more violent against schismatics* of

all descriptions." "Out of the pale of its faith" (that of the established church) "he never was very ready to admit of any ecclesiastical desert whatever."—Vol. I. p. 39.

Mr. Stephens could perhaps have explained on what theory of the subject the established church could have a strenuous advocate in an utter contemner of its creed. But that a man holding such notions concerning religion as Mr. Horne Tooke notoriously did, should be violent against schismatics, is one of the most scandalous inconsistencies in the whole records of human perversity. To think that a man so fierce (and surely we do not censure this animosity) against meanness, hypocrisy, time-serving, and treachery, could also find an object of antipathy and reprobation in that conscientiousness which would not dishonestly and treacherously profess and take the emolument of an adherence to a church, while seriously disapproving its tenets or institutions! and that he could, the while, give himself all manner of credit for rectitude of judgment and moral feeling! But it is thus that irreligion is very apt to become an occultation of common sense in matters where religion is concerned.

Possibly, however, there was somewhat more sense in this than may be obvious just at first sight. It would not be very strange if a man who rejects religion should be very desirous to obtain that sort of countenance to his rejection, which he would seem to receive from the character of those who professed to espouse it, while they were all found devoid of principle. He may therefore very naturally be vexed there should be men to prove by example that Christianity is a promoter of integrity of conduct.

Reverting to the biographer's assertion, that Mr. Horne Tooke thought the hierarchy "well calculated to incite to," as well as "reward, virtue and merit;" we may very fairly make it a question whether we do not get nearer his real opinion in the following extract from a letter he wrote to Wilkes, from one of the stages of his first journey in France.

"You are entering into a correspondence with a parson, and I am greatly apprehensive lest that title should disgust; but give me leave to

assure you I am not *ordained* a hypocrite. It is true I have suffered the infectious hand of a bishop to be waved over me; whose imposition, like the sop given to Judas, is only a signal for the devil to enter.

"I allow, that usually at that touch—'fugiant pudor verumque, fidesque. In quorum subeunt locum fraudes, dolique, insidiaeque,' &c. &c., but I hope I have escaped the contagion; and, if I have not, if you should at any time discover the BLACK spot under the tongue, pray kindly assist me to conquer the prejudices of education and profession."—p. 76.

We have little doubt that this indelible record may be taken as the genuine expression of his estimate of the institution to which he belonged, and was always mortified to belong; and therefore as a measure of the honesty, the equity, and the decorum with which he could be "violent against schismatics." He boldly declared there was nothing in this letter which he should be ashamed to have generally known, when he understood that the worthy friend to whom it had been addressed threatened to publish it, in revenge of some offence he had chosen to take at the writer. But nevertheless, he must have been excessively vexed at his own indiscretion, even though he had not entertained (it does not appear whether he ever did entertain) any ambitious designs on the higher stations in the church, designs to which the public disclosure of such sentiments would inevitably be fatal. He would be more mortified at being exhibited in this attitude of humiliation. A proud man, an able man, a learned man, and a knowing man, thus almost prostrate before such a piece of human nature as Wilkes! indignantly but impotently endeavouring to tear off his sacerdotal vestments; making a bitter but poor jest of ceremonies which he had been obliged to maintain the utmost gravity while undergoing; earnest to divert the anticipated sneer from himself to his fraternity and sacred vocation; eager to prove that though he *had* professed to be "moved by the Holy Ghost," he was not, he really and in good faith was not, unworthy of the friendship of one of the most abandoned profligates on earth; entreating to be allowed to make a sacrifice of whatever in his education and chosen profession might be displeasing to this regent of doctrines and morals;

and hoping to be at length, through his auspicious influence, redeemed from the degradation at least, if he could not be delivered from the fact, of being a priest !

His feelings with regard to his profession would be combined with many other sentiments to make him exult in the prospect of another travelling adventure, which was to extend through the most interesting parts of France and Italy. He went again in the capacity of tutor to a young man of fortune. He left his canonicals at Dover, and "assumed the habit, appearance, and manners of a private gentleman." "Nor ought it to be omitted," says the biographer, "that, on both this and the former occasion, the young gentleman entrusted to his care, never once dreamed that he was under his inspection ; but deemed himself highly honoured, as well as obliged, by the permission to accompany him in the capacity of a friend." Wilkes, in one of the letters in which the grand quarrel between the two friends was publicly fought out, alludes to Horne's residence in Italy, with strong intimations respecting his morals, and challenges him to venture a reference on that subject to an—"Italian gentleman now in London," a challenge which the clergyman does not notice in his reply.

However this may be, he seems, on his return, to have taken to the pulpit with a considerable degree of activity, and with a distinction which might soon have grown to popularity and celebrity.

"There is abundance of proof, indeed, that Mr. Horne was now considered an admirable preacher, and that his eloquence only wanted cultivation, to place him among the most successful of our English divines. But it was in orthodox and doctrinal discourses that he chiefly excelled, and he is accordingly reported to have distinguished himself greatly by his exhortations before confirmation, on which occasion, by mingling sound argument with kind and affectionate persuasion, he never failed to make a suitable impression on all who heard him. In short, he might not only have been greatly respected, as a popular pastor, but was still in a fair way to become one of the pillars of the Anglican church, when a memorable event occurred in the political world, and proved an insurmountable, though not, perhaps, an unexpected obstacle to his future preferment."

This event was the famous Middlesex election, in which

the government was braved, encountered, and defeated by a daring mock patriot, of ruined fortune, obnoxious to the laws, and of infamous morals.

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The leading facts of that transaction are sufficiently known. Wilkes, though he carried the election, was rejected by the House of Commons. He had the same success a second, third, fourth, and fifth time, in quick succession, and still met the same repulse. Colonel Luttrell was his opponent in the fifth election, and was declared duly elected, though he had only about a fourth part of the votes. It is stated that the mob became so furious on this, that the Colonel would have lost his life but for the personal interposition of Mr. Horne, who rescued him and conducted him to a place of safety. Our author observes,

“ This generous conduct must surely be allowed to have been worthy of applause ; but, such is the deadly enmity of political contests, that it rendered him ever after suspected by many of that party, and, on a future occasion, was frequently quoted against him as an indelible disgrace.”

Horne put forth the whole force of his mind in the preparation for this great contest, and in the management of it ; and to his able and indefatigable exertions the biographer mainly attributes the energy and success of the popular cause. His courage, which was of the coolest and firmest kind, shrunk from no hazard : his resources of argument and declamation were inexhaustible : his personal applications had every diversity of address and persuasion : his very moderate pecuniary means were freely devoted : and his measures and exertions to preserve good order, and prevent all violence, beyond that of language, on the popular side, proved how well he was qualified to manage the populace, and how much influence he must have previously acquired over their minds. This care to prevent violence was strongly contrasted with the conduct of the government party, who hired and embodied a gang of ruffians for the purpose of perpetrating it. In consequence, several unoffending persons were desperately wounded, and one

man was killed. Horne's zeal and intrepidity were eminently displayed in his unsuccessful efforts to bring to justice the criminals in this and one or two other deeds of partly similar nature. Why such efforts should be unsuccessful, when those criminals were ascertained, it is not difficult to conjecture.

The share he took in this contest would be to him of the nature of an experiment on his own powers; and the manner in which he had borne himself through so various and turbulent a warfare, would greatly confirm and augment his consciousness of extraordinary strength. While this would tend to impart a tone of provocation and defiance, the exercise of so ardent, and in his constant opinion, so virtuous an hostility, excited a passion for war which could not in a mind constituted of such "stern stuff" as his, become extinct as soon as the particular occasion was past. A heated piece of iron retains its power to burn longer than slighter substances. The passion was prolonged in a keen watchfulness to find an enemy, and a fierce promptitude to attack him. When we add to this, that from his childhood his hatred had been directed against the sins of governments, we shall not wonder to find him, from the period in question, the unrelenting persecutor of statesmen, and their corruptions, and their adherents. Among the first objects of this extinguishable spirit of war was a Right Honourable person of the name of Onslow, a member of administration, who was publicly called to account for an imputed delinquency in so peremptory a style, that he was provoked to make his ultimate answer by a prosecution. Horne, defeated at first, stoutly fought the matter through the courts to a third trial, in which he was completely victorious; and it was a victory over a much greater personage than his immediate antagonist, for he defeated Lord Mansfield, and in a manner so marked and decisive that it must have caused that personage extreme mortification. This was a proud commencement of that series of interviews which Horne was destined to have with his lordship, under the relation of judge and culprit, and might contribute not a little to his maintaining ever

afterwards such an attitude of intrepidity and equality as no other man did, in the same relation, to the great despot of law.

There awaited him, however, a much more vexatious, and less eventually prosperous contest, in his public correspondence with Wilkes. It will depend on the various degrees of interest felt by readers about Horne's history and character to be grateful to the biographer, to forgive him, or to condemn him, for inserting nearly the whole of this correspondence, occupying about a *hundred and forty pages*. We profess to place ourselves, not without a very great effort, in the middle class of these three. We think a short analysis might have competently exhibited the merits of the question, and would have satisfied at least half of the readers of the work. If it was presumed that a considerable number would really wish for more, the entire correspondence might have been printed separately for their sake. But probably it is a better trade calculation to load every copy with the additional cost of this republished correspondence, than to sell the work for so much less, and leave it to the option of the purchasers to send also for this supplemental part.

It contains a great deal of able writing, but is so completely of a personal nature as that it would require the combatants to be of much greater historical importance to give it any permanent interest. It explains why they became virulent and implacable enemies, and exhibits a graceless picture of strong talent on the one side, and alert talent on the other, earnestly exerted and delighted to tear, and stab, and poison, and ready, apparently, to join in a most devout prayer to the nether world for more efficient implements of offence. Horne's letters are composed with a grave, intense argumentative acrimony. Wilkes's, with still more deadly rancour, are more volatile, satiric, affectedly careless, and captiously smart: they display the boldest impudence of depravity, with wit enough to render it both amusing and mischievous. In point of success, relatively to the main matters in dispute, there is no manner of comparison between the two.

Horne's part of the correspondence, though it may not completely vindicate himself in all points, perfectly explodes his opponent to atoms. It proves this noisy demagogue, who scorned the people as much as he gulled them, and hated men in the proportion in which he had received any favours from them, was one of the most worthless articles ever put in the human figure. Nevertheless, it seems that, in general estimation, Wilkes was the victor.

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We cannot comprehend on what ground "superior skill" is attributed to Wilkes in this conflict; nor should we have known where to seek a proof of his "more intimate knowledge of mankind," if something like such proof had not presented itself in the circumstance of his confidence, that he should be able to maintain himself in favour with the multitude in spite of those exposures by which his adversary probably expected, though perhaps with less confidence, to destroy his popularity. Indeed Horne did himself, a little while afterwards, almost acknowledge that his enemy was the more knowing man, when he said, in one of his letters to Junius, "I am sometimes half inclined to suspect that Mr. Wilkes has formed a truer judgment of mankind than I have." But really, in glancing through the controversy now, in the indifference of feeling with which matters so long past and comparatively unimportant are regarded, we think almost every reader will allow that Horne might, without forfeiting much of his high reputation for shrewdness and knowledge of the world, have presumed that his statements could not fail, at the least, greatly to moderate the popular idolatry of his opponent. Unless they regarded the series of allegations as a string of absolute fabrications and falsehoods, and that too in spite of the evidence by which many of them would be substantiated, it is impossible to understand how the public could resist the conviction, that this champion of liberty and justice was destitute of conscience and shame; that he was selfish and ravenous to the last possible excess; that he cared for no public interest but so far as he could turn it to his

own advantage ; that in virtue of his acting the patriot he arrogantly demanded, of a party of public spirited men who were associated for political objects, to be supported, by subscriptions, in a sumptuous style of living, while his immense debts also were to be liquidated from the same source ; that he was indignant when any portion of the pecuniary liberality which had from the first been intended for more purposes than merely aids to him, was proposed to be applied to any one of those purposes, however urgent and important ; that he had thus become a burden and nuisance to his generous supporters, as intolerable as the magician or demon that fixed himself on the shoulders of Sinbad ; that his capacity and fame for daring exploits did not preclude the meanness that could descend to the most paltry tricks ; that, in short, the sooner the public cause could be totally dis-severed from his interests and character the better. To convince the people of the necessity of this separation we can believe to have been really the leading object with Horne in this ferocious controversy ; though his own vindication and revenge came in, of course, for a considerable share of his concern.

Perhaps it is allowable to receive with some degree of scepticism Horne's declarations that he had *never* lent his aid to the mock patriot from any personal partiality to him, but always exclusively on public grounds ; having, he says, very early in their acquaintance, been led to conceive "an infinite contempt for the very name of Mr. Wilkes." If, however, he did, almost from the first, estimate the man at his true worth, we know not how it is possible to excuse him for being content, during so considerable a space of time, that the public cause should be identified with the character and interests of such a man. It is true that the man, however bad, had a just quarrel against the government ; the nation also had its just quarrel ; and the prosecution of both these quarrels coalesced into one action. But it was of little consequence what became of so profligate and worthless a person : and one really should have been glad if the nation could have found out any other possible means of assert-

ing its rights, than by identifying those dignified and sacred objects, justice and liberty, with a compost of vices that proclaimed itself for their apostle and martyr. Doubtless it must be acknowledged that such a case would, to a man of public spirit, and at the same time refined and religious conscience, present a choice of two evils. It is, on the one hand, a great evil for a nation to suffer, for a year or a month, an infringement of any one of its rights. It is a very great evil, on the other hand, that the most momentous national interests and political principles should, in order to their being defensively maintained, be suffered to be, as it were, personated by a character that will throw and fasten upon them all the associations of vice and dishonour, a character strongly tending to give the scrupulous and the virtuous a loathing of politics and almost a disaffection to the very name of liberty, and to supply the advocates of arbitrary and slavish principles with a topic, or rather a whole volume of topics, by which to give their children, their neighbours, and their countrymen a degraded representation of the doctrines of liberty.—Either Horne or Junius, we really forget which, somewhere says, that if the very Devil himself could be supposed to put himself in the place of advocate and vindicator of some point of justice, he ought to be, so far, supported. We cannot agree to this, for the simple reason, that the just cause would ultimately suffer greater injury by the dishonour it would contract, in the general estimation of mankind, from the character of its vindicator, than probably it would suffer from the wrong against which it would be vindicated. It must be a case of a most perilous urgency indeed if it will not be more politic to wait a while, and ransack the whole nation for an honest man to be put to the service, rather than employ an agent, whose qualities make even ourselves sometimes sick of the very business in the prosecution of which we support him.

The power of an infamous character to defile and depreciate whatever is associated with it, was exemplified in the case of Horne himself, in the permanent injury which his moral and political reputation sustained from

his temporary connexion and co-operation with Wilkes. Whether he was aware of it or not, the fact was, that the suspicious and undervaluing estimate, we may say in plain terms the bad opinion, entertained of him throughout the sequel of his political life, by the more moral and cautious part of society, was in no small degree owing to this association. His declarations were perhaps accompanied by evidence enough to entitle them to credit, that his co-operation had been exclusively for public interests, and not a step beyond what he thought those interests demanded. He rendered some unquestionable services to public justice and popular rights. He gave uncommon proofs of disinterestedness, at least of superiority to all the sordid kinds of self-interest. He was free from some of Wilkes's vices. But all this was unavailing. The stain was indelible. And the fatal mischief thus done to his character extended to his political doctrines: insomuch that they had the less chance of being listened to with candour and respect, and of convincing in proportion to the force of argument, as they came from him;—and others taught them with less success because he taught them too.

There was, however, as we have already noticed, a short season of fermentation in the public mind, during which he suffered the most violent opprobrium, not for having co-operated with Wilkes, but for having renounced the connexion, clearly not with any desertion of principles or public objects, but for the very sake of those principles and objects. We do not wonder that we find him afterwards rating popular favour very low, and uniformly holding forth, that, if he had not stronger and better motives than any wish to obtain it, he should be a fool to undergo any more political toils, or expose himself to any more political dangers. To be sure one does think very meanly of whatever portion of the popular mind could be enthusiastic for Wilkes after Horne's plain statements of facts concerning him. But the most scandalous thing of all was that *Junius*, whatever he might have a right to think of Horne's integrity, should make light of the facts proving the utter want of

it in Wilkes. If that mysterious personage had been universally accepted as the oracle of morality, we should, by this time, have been sunk even much deeper than we are, in that political corruption which raised so great a tempest of his indignation. He *might* perhaps have contrived to keep on some decent terms with morals, in attempting to maintain that the national politics were in such a crisis as to reduce the people to the alternative of supporting, to every length, a very bad man, or surrendering their own rights for ever,—had he, with all, expressed the strongest reprobation of the man's profligacy, and deplored this wretched necessity of "rallying round" so worthless a principal. But instead of such a proceeding, we behold this austere censor flinging away with scorn a grave indictment which proved the incurable depravity and worthlessness of the person in question, and railing at the equal folly and malice that could pretend to make the man's personal vices a disqualification for the office of champion of public justice.

The whole correspondence between Horne and Junius is inserted, though it is to be found in every copy of Junius, that is, in the hands of almost every reading person in the country. This is a glaring specimen of book-making assurance.

There is, we suppose, a general agreement of opinion with the biographer, that Horne had decidedly the advantage in the substantial matters in dispute, that is, the merits of himself and Wilkes; while as to Junius, there could not well be a stronger testimony to his powers, than to say that in the general force of writing he as decidedly appears the superior man. One or two of his retorts, particularly, are deadly and irresistible.

About the time of Horne's public quarrel with Wilkes, and in the interval between that and his combat with Junius, he was rendering considerable service in matters of national right and privilege; first in resisting what, if quietly suffered, might soon have grown to a most iniquitous and star-chamber practice, the attempt to compel a man arraigned as a culprit to answer interrogatories

tending to make him criminate himself. This attempt was made by Lord Mansfield in the case of Bingley, a printer, who was prosecuted for a libel, and whom the evidence was not sufficient to convict. Horne at once continued to excite the national attention to this alarming innovation and its natural consequences, and confirmed, and procured to be ultimately rewarded, the courageous obstinacy of the printer in refusing to answer the interrogatories. The haughty judge had the mortification of discharging at last the man whom a considerable length of imprisonment had not in the smallest degree intimidated from defying him. Horne was extremely and very justly zealous and anxious that this man should, for the sake of example, receive the most marked tokens of public favour.

His next effort was to maintain the right of the nation to be made acquainted with the proceedings of the legislature. By many of those who can never hear his name without some reproach of his factious spirit, it would nevertheless be deemed a great violation of public rights, if the debates in parliament were to be suddenly forbidden, by authority to be published. They are probably but little aware, how much the nation, in obtaining the practical concession of this as a right, is indebted to him. No such thing, except under some fictitious form, of little real use to the public, had been allowed before the period of his political activity. The House of Commons indignantly and pertinaciously resisted the attempts to assume it as a right: and though the prohibition *must* have been taken off some time, it was owing very much to his management and energy that it was effectually broken through about forty years since. It appears to have been, in a considerable measure, in consequence and in execution of a plan laid by him, that several spirited printers dared, nearly at the same time, to bring the question to issue by boldly publishing some of the debates: and in consequence of his influence with the city magistrates that these delinquents were enabled to brave or elude the utmost exertions of the House to

to punish them. And ever since, that liberty has been held by the people so much in the form and spirit of an absolute right, that there has been no material effort to take it from them.

Mr. Stephens informs us that at length, at the age of thirty-seven, Horne "resigned his gown;" which we can well believe he had for a good while worn with sensations but little more enviable than those inflicted on Hercules by the Centaur's shirt. In throwing it off he assured and congratulated himself that he was escaping into an unlimited freedom, the first luxury of which would be to adopt, without any further interference, a profession congenial to his taste and ambition, and in which he had apparently very good reason to flatter himself he should attain the highest distinction and emolument. The latter of these, indeed, was very far from being an object of eagerness in any part of his life; but so many expences incurred in prosecuting public objects, and in resisting or sustaining the effects of political and legal revenge, often gave him cause to feel the narrowness of his pecuniary resources.

We have a somewhat entertaining account of his frugal domestic economy, while preparing himself for the bar, after the resignation of his vicarage of New Brentford—the highest ground in official rank, strictly so denominated, which was destined to be attained by one of the strongest and most ambitious spirits of the age, whose juvenile and inferior associates were seen scaling, and taking a firm position on the heights of ecclesiastical and legal dignities and wealth. In this state of seclusion and severe study he was, nevertheless, always ready at a moment's warning, to spring like a royal tiger from his thicket, on the agents and abettors of any public delinquency. Mr. Tooke, a moderate wealthy political friend, whose name he was afterwards authorized to assume, sought his advice in a case that appeared desperate. In consequence of purchasing an estate called Purley, (from which Horne's great philological work took its title) he had been involved in a vexatious litigation about manorial rights with a neighbouring gentleman of great

influence, who had betaken himself at last to the decisive expedient of an act of parliament. The bill which was in progress was highly unjust; but through some such fatality, as would never have happened before or since in such a place, it was going forward with the most perfect success, in contempt of every effort made to place the matter in its true light; and appeared certain of the final sanction of the House of Commons on the third reading—appointed for the very next day to that in which the case was despondingly stated to Horne. His answer was, "If the facts be as you represent them, the House shall not pass that bill." He immediately suggested an expedient which would perhaps have occurred to no other man in England, and took on himself the execution at a hazard which very few would have been willing, for the sake of either friendship or public justice to share. He immediately wrote, in language the most pointedly offensive, an attack on the Speaker of the House of Commons, the noted Sir Fletcher Norton, with reference to the bill in question; and obtained its insertion in the newspaper, rendered so popular by the letters of Junius, on the condition, of course, that the printer, when summoned to account, should produce the author. The object of this proceeding was, to compel the House to a much more full and formal attention to the subject of the bill, than it had previously been induced to give; and at the same time, as an equally necessary thing, to give its virtue the benefit of having the censorial attention of the public strongly fixed on its conduct. He was confident that by doing this he should frustrate the parliamentary measure, and then, for the consequences to himself, he had courage enough to take his chance. The next day a great sensation was manifest in what might be called the political public; and, as he had foreseen, the attention of a full House was called, in precedence to all other business, to the flagrant outrage on its dignity—a dignity so vulnerable by a plain *charge* of misconduct, though it had not been injured in the least by the misconduct itself. After a fine display of generous indigna-

tion a summons was sent for the instant appearance of the printer. He obeyed, and, as he had been directed, immediately gave up the name of the criminal in chief, who had taken care to be already in the House, prepared to confront, probably with very little trepidation, the whole anger of the august assembly. A momentary silence of surprise and confusion followed the announcement of his name, which was come to be almost synonymous with that expression of recognizance, "the enemy." On being called forth, he disavowed all disrespect to the Speaker whom he had libelled, calmly explained the motives of the proceeding, and then make such a luminous statement of the case of his friend, that the schemers and advocates of the injustice were baffled, the obnoxious parts of the bill were immediately thrown out, and several resolutions were moved and carried "to prevent all such precipitate proceedings for the future." There is no punishing conquerors, however offensive may have been their conduct. After a very slight formality of detention in custody, he was set at liberty, on some pretended inconclusiveness of proof against him.

The next thing that brought him out again conspicuously before the public, was an advertisement in the newspapers, signed with his name, proposing a subscription for the families of the Americans who were slain at Lexington, a fact which he pronounced, in the most explicit language possible, (and which he repeated in a second publication,) a *murder* committed by the king's troops. He wished and hoped by some such act of daring and notoriety, to rouse the attention of the nation to the infatuated proceedings of the government with respect to the American colonies. For a good while no vindictive notice was taken of this wicked libel, as it was found to be when the minister was become stronger in the parliament. In the second year after its publication, the writer suddenly and unexpectedly found himself within the iron grasp of the attorney-general, Thurlow, with his information *ex-officio*, and had another opportunity of evincing his courage and resources in a trial before Lord Mansfield, and a personal contest with

him. The speeches in defence are given, and characters of the judge and attorney-general.

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There could be no manner of uncertainty as to the result of such a prosecution against Horne. Though he was, it seems, the only man in the country that incurred any punishment on account of opinions avowed against the American war, he could not in the least wonder that in his case they were to be expiated by a fine and twelve months residence in the King's Bench prison. He *might* however, notwithstanding all he had seen of the management of public concerns, feel some degree of surprise, as we suppose most of the readers of the description will, at the benevolent care which had been taken that the imprisonment should not involve a complication of evils unknown to the laws, and beyond the purposes of justice.

"Conversant as he was in the ordinary transactions of human life, his surprise cannot be supposed trifling, when, after being consigned to this jail, by the special command of the Chief Justice of England, he had still a habitation to seek ; for, after stopping a few minutes in the lodge, he was conducted to a vacant space within the walls, and there left, in utter ignorance of his future fate, and an entire stranger to all around him ! It may be supposed, perhaps, by the sons and daughters of affluence, who reside in splendid apartments, and repose every night on beds of down, that even for the most wretched prisoner there is due provision in respect to a decent lodging ; where poverty, sorrow, or misfortunes may be secluded from the gaze of mankind, and find an asylum at least, if comfort be denied them. But this would prove a grand mistake, for the captives being generally more numerous than the apartments, it is by seniority alone that the unhappy inmates succeed to the occupancy of a small bed-chamber, totally devoid of any furniture or convenience whatever. All this, as Mr. Horne solemnly assured me, he learned, for the first time, on the parade, whither he proceeded in charge of two tipstaves, who took their leave without condescending to give him any information whatever. On his distress being made known to the spectators, a person, who proved to be a Jew, offered, for a sum of money, to accommodate him immediately. Ten guineas were accordingly deposited in his hands ; but it was speedily discovered that this son of Israel had not any apartment at his command, being only the joint-tenant of a miserable little room, in common with four or five other debtors. To the honour of the prisoners, however, they immediately interposed, and obliged him to restore the money to the stranger, who, being charmed with their love of justice, and determined not to be outdone by them in point of generosity, divided the sum in question among the poorer sort of the inhabitants. The clerk of the papers, on learning this anecdote, immediately made his appearance, and offered,

for *five hundred pounds*, beforehand, to accommodate him with a small house, situate within the rules, during the whole period of his confinement; but as the payment of a weekly sum was preferred, the negotiation was instantly concluded on that basis."

He sustained very material injury, both in his property and his health, from this imprisonment; but the most vexatious circumstance of his whole life was to be encountered soon after his restoration to liberty. He had kept the number of terms requisite as a qualification for being called to the bar, and proceeded to make his application for this formality of admittance, without, it seems, the slightest suspicion that an insuperable obstacle was to rise up suddenly, as if from the ground, at his approach. The first and a second application were resisted by a majority of the benchers of the Inner Temple, and with such circumstances as to convince him that any further prosecution of the object would be vain. "This refusal," says the biographer, "was a cruel and severe blow. Indeed it was struck at a vital part; and, I am persuaded, contributed not a little to sour and embitter the remaining portion of his life." The repulse is attributed in part to the "mean jealousy of some practising-lawyers, who were afraid of being eclipsed by a new competitor."

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Some other reason, however, for the rejection, was to be pretended; and the only thing that even lawyers could found an exception upon, was the circumstance of his having been a clergyman.

Thus rejecting one profession—rejected by another—injured in his small fortune—but elate with the proudest consciousness of talent, he was to commit himself, under inauspicious omens, for the remainder of his life, a very protracted remainder, as it proved, to the course of events and chances in a turbulent and changing state of the times. He was, however, certain that no man could have greater promptitude and courage in seizing events, and he might be acquitted of any great excess of vanity if he even flattered himself he could sometimes create them. No disappointments, nor the comparatively humble rank in society in which he was condemned to continue,

could, in the smallest degree, repress the tone in which he had assumed to be the censor of the conduct of the uppermost people in the state, whether taken as individuals, or in the imposing pomp of official or legislative combination. Probably no man ever did, on the strength of what he possessed in his mere person, and in the destitution of all advantages of birth, wealth, station, or connexions, maintain, with such perfect and easy uniformity, so challenging and peremptory a manner towards great and pretending folks of all sorts. This arose from the consciousness that at all times he dared to fight any of them, on any subject, at a moment's warning, in writing, in personal dispute, in courts of law, or even, we fear, in that *unlawful* mode which it is the disgrace of this nation to tolerate.

In 1780 he wrote, in conjunction with Dr. Price, a tract against the American war, which is here represented as having contributed materially to its termination, by hastening the downfall of the wretched statesmen who were carrying it on. When the nation was restored to peace, he seems to have felt an unusual desire to taste it himself. He purchased a small estate near Huntingdon, and applied himself zealously to the study and practice of agriculture, to which he had long had a partiality, as what he regarded as "an useful and liberal science."

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A violent ague compelled him to a speedy retreat from the reclaiming of marshes, and threw him back on the great town, where he recovered his health, took a house, and fairly closed with his destiny to be for life a wit, scholar, philosopher, and politician, without affluence, or power, or any effectual favour of those who possessed them.

He soon entered with great ardour into the cause of parliamentary reform; by coming forward as the champion of which, in 1782, William Pitt attained little less than the highest pitch of his father's popularity. Horne published a curious and ingenious scheme of a reformed representation and mode of election, of which an outline is here exhibited. But he was so really intent on the

substantial object, that he made no difficulty of dismissing any peculiarity of his own speculations and projects, and coalescing in the apparently more practicable ones of Mr. Pitt—"ingenuously preferring," says Mr. Stephens, "that gentleman's plan to his own."

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He became an intimate, earnest, indefatigable co-operator with this youth of promise, in the preparation of the plans and means of purifying the legislature; and entertained the highest respect for his political integrity so late, at least, as 1788, in which year he published, under the title of "Two Pair of Portraits," an extended and very pointed contrast between Pitt and Fox, greatly to the disadvantage and depreciation of the latter, who was never forgiven by Horne for that decided hostility to popular interests with which he had begun his political career, and his subsequent coalition with Lord North. "While others objected to the inexperience of Mr. Pitt," says our author, "Horne referred to his talents, his candour, his ingenuousness, and augured the happiest results from his labours. He never, it is asserted, carried his principles of political reform beyond those avowed by that statesman, and constantly opposed the doctrines of annual parliaments and universal suffrage,* which were maintained by some of the zealous advocates of the cause, and which, Mr. Stephens says, contributed to defeat that cause by exciting an excessive alarm in the aristocratical part of the nation. It appears that the subject of these memoirs was for some time, notwithstanding all his knowledge of men and politicians, very sanguine in his confidence of its substantial success. It sunk into languor, however, even before the paragon of political virtue ascended into the better light which shines on the high places of the state. How it fared then, and ever since, nobody needs to be told.

"The Diversions of Purley," a book of very moderate size at its first appearance, was published in 1786. We

* At a somewhat later period it is said that he "hesitated as to the propriety of annual parliaments."

have in the memoirs a whole needless chapter, in the form of an unsatisfactory analysis, instead of a brief general explanation in two or three lucid pages, of the object of the book, and of that peculiarity of its theory in which its acknowledged originality consisted.

In the following year he resumed his pen on a subject which made a great noise in its day, though now gone to its place among forgotten trifles. He vindicated, on the ground of law and general propriety, the reported marriage of the Prince of Wales with Mrs. Fitzherbert, assuming the fact of the marriage as undeniable. His next production was the "Portraits," already noticed, which concluded with these two questions ;

First question. Which two of them will you choose to hang up in your cabinets, the Pitts or the Foxes?

Second question. Where, on your conscience, should the other two be hanged ?

The author remarks what a prodigious alteration there would have been in at least one of the delineations, if the artist had brought the subjects again under his pencil a few years afterwards.

The celebrated trial of Mr. Hastings is mentioned as, within the whole extent of Horne's active life, the only great national concern in which he was content to be neutral ; and even in that he strongly censured the mode of proceeding,—the multitude of the charges, the long speeches, the appeals to the passions, and the ruinous protraction. He thought if guilt existed it might be ascertained by a very short inquiry ; and in that case he was "for punishing the receiver, and restoring the stolen property to the right owners." This might be very excellent doctrine : and therefore it was for owners *de facto* to beware of even permitting, much more of hastening, any decisive proof of the guilt.

A pleasing circumstance is related of his being applied to for advice relative to an Englishman taken by a corsair and detained in slavery at Algiers, but liberated in consequence of Horne's benevolent exertions. This very circumstance was the cause of his being brought into a certain degree of connexion with the famous and

obnoxious London Corresponding Society, of which the biographer relates the very humble origin and the early history.

He made a distinguished figure in the year 1790, by contesting, with Mr. Fox and Lord Hood, the election for Westminster, with the greatest ability, and with no small measure of popularity, which he augmented by turning to the utmost account the refusal of his eminent antagonist to give a pledge for parliamentary reform. His failure, however, was a matter of course, and which he foresaw from the first; but he made it contribute even more than success would have done to his fame, by means of that memorable petition to the House of Commons, which contained certain bold and contemptuous expressions of crimination that have ever since been employed as the most pointed common-places in the censures of its corrupt constitution. The petition was read to the assembly, and received with as much displeasure as it is becoming and dignified for conscious and lofty integrity to manifest, under calumnies which it can calmly defy. The petition was readily voted "frivolous and vexatious;" but it is perhaps to be regretted, nevertheless, that it could not comport with the insulted dignity of the House to vouchsafe, in a very few words, such a notice and specific falsification of the following passage, as to prevent its being so often triumphantly repeated by the factious and the wicked.

"The said scrutiny was, by the direction or approbation of the House of Commons, relinquished, without effect, after having lasted ten months, and with an expense to Sir Cecil Wray of many thousand pounds more than appears by some late proceedings in Chancery to be the allowed average price of a perpetual seat in the House of ———, where seats for legislators are as notoriously bought and sold as stalls and standing for cattle at a fair." Vol. i. p. 94.

The expense occasioned to the other candidates by this petition brought on Horne an action for debt, in which Mr. Fox was successful, notwithstanding the singularly able and animated exertions of the defendant, who could not fail to take full advantage of such an opportunity of throwing out a number of bold and impor-

tant observations on the rights of juries, and on the flagrant corruptions in the representation, particularly of Westminster.

In 1722, he became impatient of the pure breezes and exhilarating odours of the metropolis, and removed his residence to the village where he continued all the remainder of his life.

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It is not, to be sure, a very lengthened apology, and deprecation of loyal and aristocratical anger, that the biographer is disposed to make for the animated interest taken by Mr. Horne Tooke* in this prodigious event (the French Revolution); but even still fewer words might have sufficed. Previously to it the unanimous voice of Englishmen, in notes alternately of scorn and commiseration, had pronounced the French people a nation of slaves; and nothing on earth could be more palpable, than that the slaves of a government have no chance for freedom but through the energy and assertion of their own will. When such a grand national assertion was successfully taking place, to have been otherwise than gratified in beholding it, would have betrayed, in any pretended friend of liberty, a meanly constituted mind—unless he were a prophet; and we have no faith in any man's intelligence having been, at the commencement of that revolution, so prophetic of the sequel as to justify him in refusing, on the whole, his congratulations. Doubtless a man who could form no judgment on such a subject without the intermingling and influence of religious ideas, and the most refined order of moral principles, would have had, on this great occasion, some perceptions and fears to which our ex-clergyman was a stranger. Such a man might at some moments have feared it was too much to hope, that so depraved and irreligious a people should suddenly receive an immense and unmixed favour from the Divine Governor. He might have surmised with alarm some possible conse-

* He had assumed this additional surname in 1782, at the request of the gentleman of that name whose heir he was now understood to be.

quences of the sudden breaking loose of millions of ignorant papists and oppressed indignant semi-barbarians, incited, directed, represented, by thousands or myriads of infidels. His exultation, therefore, would have been greatly modified; but still the appearances were such as to justify a preponderance, for a season, of the hopeful and complacent feelings, in a mind confident that a grand amelioration of the human condition, in these latter ages, is among the appointments of the Divine Goodness.

Though it is probable Horne entertained, notwithstanding any unfavourable omens from the quarter of religion and religious morality, an almost unmixed confidence in the happy results of this portentous movement in the civilized world, it uniformly appears that he had no wish for the revolutionary part of its agitations to be extended to this country. Amidst all his zeal for reforms he had invariably, and we believe sincerely, declared for our old constitution; and that not under any illusory shape of approving certain abstract principles, supposed to be embodied in that constitution, and yet capable of taking a very different practical form; but with the most explicit approbation of an effective royalty and aristocracy. He was even solicitous that the approving good wishes, and the congratulations, conveyed to the French revolutionists from the friends of liberty in this country, should not go unaccompanied with some expressions of satisfaction with our own political system. When, in a meeting convoked to celebrate the event, Mr. Sheridan moved a resolution,

“Highly complimentary to the French revolution, Horne expressed a strong desire that some qualifying expression might be added to this general motion of approbation, and insisted ‘that the English nation had only to maintain and improve the constitution which their ancestors have transmitted to them.’ This position, although at first opposed, with tumult and vehemence, in consequence of his arguments and perseverance, was at length carried unanimously,—in the following form: “We feel equal satisfaction that the subjects of England, by the virtuous exertions of their ancestors, have not so arduous a task to perform as the French had; but have only to maintain and improve the constitution which their forefathers have transmitted to them.”

It would be possible for captiousness to go the length of affecting to discover in all this an artful contrivance for beguiling away loyal suspicion and vigilance from his deep-laid and pernicious designs. But we believe every one of the few candid and impartial readers of his life will be fully convinced, that this abhorred and pestiferous anarchist held most firmly the principles of a constitutional patriot, and never formed any projects inconsistent with that character.

As much candour, at the least, as this would require, is displayed on the other side by our author, when, in approaching the memorable period in Horne Tooke's life in which he himself anticipated a speedy surrender of that life on the gallows, the following admission is made in favour of the main mover of the famous prosecutions for treason in 1794.

"It is not to be supposed that Mr. Pitt, whose father had been the original author, and himself the prime mover, of a parliamentary reform, would have been so lost to all sense of shame, as to attempt to commit a legal murder on those who had followed his own example, and merely persevered in those plans which he himself had broached, matured, and abandoned! That minister never conceived the idea of a public prosecution, until he was firmly persuaded that a treasonable plot existed for the overthrow of the state, and that, under a popular pretext, a revolution was actually meditated, on the same principles, and with the same designs, as had been so recently effected in France."

Mr. Stephens gives a very curious account of a proceeding of Horne Tooke's at this period of loyal alarm and almost frenzy; a proceeding which formed, certainly, a most capital joke, but which, just at that crisis, involved some possibilities of mischief which would have been a greater price than even so excellent a joke was worth. The ministry employed and entertained a multitude of "reporters,"—a genteel denomination for spies; and a proportion of these were persons not of the meanest class, in the ordinary sense of that description.

"Some of these were actuated by zeal; while others, who would have spurned the idea of pecuniary gratifications, were influenced solely by the hopes of offices and appointments. One of the latter had for some time attached himself to Mr. Tooke, and was a frequent visitor at Wimbledon. His station and character were calculated to shield him from

suspicion, but his host, who was too acute to be easily duped, soon saw through the flimsy veil of his pretended discontent. As he had many personal friends, in various departments of government, he soon discovered the views, connexions, and pursuits of his guest; but, instead of upbraiding him with his treachery, and dismissing him with contempt, as most other men in his situation would have done, he determined to foil him, if possible, at his own weapons."—"He accordingly pretended to admit the spy into his entire confidence, and completed the delusion, by actually rendering the person who wished to circumvent him, in his turn, a dupe. Mr. Tooke began by dropping remote hints relative to the strength and zeal of the popular party, taking care to magnify their numbers, praise their unanimity, and commend their resolution. By degrees he descended to particulars, and at length communicated confidentially, and under the most solemn promises of secrecy, the alarming intelligence that some of the guards were gained; that an armed force was organized; and that the nation was actually on the eve of a revolution. After a number of interviews, he at length affected to own, that he himself was at the head of the conspiracy, and boasted like Pompey of old, 'that he could raise legions merely by stamping on the ground with his foot.'

All this the miserable dupe, whose name we presume Mr. Stephens could have given, eagerly reported to his shrewd patrons, who could estimate so correctly the faculties of the two men, and were doubtless, among their other cares, beginning to consider which of the sinecures was likely to fall, or what new office they could invent, to reward so honourable a patriot.

What was a joke at Wimbledon was a serious and awful thing at Whitehall. The gull's stories came in thicker and darker. Other ominous signs were reported by other expectants of places, or earners of fees. A trivial note, containing the query, "Is it possible to get ready by Thursday?" was intercepted on its way to Catiline. The accidental scrawl of a child becomes portentous if an assembly of conjurers is convened to decypher it; the alarm grew to terror; and a few days afterwards the house of a friend where Horne was sitting at dinner was invested by a section of the British army, and he was carried to the Tower. After several months of confinement, with all the rigour compatible with the absolute demands of ill health, he was transferred to Newgate and the Old Bailey, to act a more conspicuous part than even in any former period of his life. During his imprisonment he did not know what was to form the

matter of the charges against him, or what would be the mode of proceeding; but was persuaded that his destruction was determined on, and that means would not fail to be found or made to effect it with a semblance of legality. He was prepared therefore, as he said, to enter the court with the spirit of a tiger; to throw off all restraint, and to fight the administrators of law and their superiors in the manner of a man who has but once to fight, and is resolved to signalize his fall by an exemplary and deserved vengeance on his persecutors. As a commencement of this last of his labours, he composed, in the interval between the charge, by Lord Chief Justice Eyre, to the grand jury and his arraignment at the bar, a speech to be addressed to the court. Of this speech "a correct copy," says Mr. Stephens, "is here inserted from the only document now in existence." This very extraordinary composition is a most daring and almost savage assault, with the charge of political and legal iniquity, on the Lord Chief Justice "and those by whom he was employed." The most deliberate and unfeigned defiance sustains the writer through every part of it.

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It was his intention to have inserted a copy of this speech in each of the London newspapers; previously, we suppose our author means, to the trial; but on due reflection he was induced to forbear so flagrant a provocation; it may well be believed that his spirit did not at any moment sink below the pitch of intrepid defiance; but it would have been a wanton display of bravery to aggravate unnecessarily every prejudice and danger he had to confront; and it even might occur to him, that such an eager commencement might seem to betray something like a defect of confidence in himself to retain the full command of his powers of offence through every part of the subsequent proceeding, and at its expected fatal termination. He slightly moderated down his spirit to the convenient temper for action. It was but an inconsiderable reduction, however, and his first interlocutions in the court were quite in the tone of a man ready for battle. But early in the proceedings his

highly stimulated and completely armed hostility was somewhat mitigated by the complaisance and respectful attention shown him by the court; in their progress it was almost beguiled away into wit and good humour; and at the conclusion he expressed himself in the strongest terms of grateful acknowledgment to the court, to his defenders, and to the jury. The pacific feeling was very much promoted by his gratification in perceiving with what a predominating vigour and decided success his cause was advancing, under his own exertions and those of his advocates. It was so bland a mood that even Mr. Pitt, though he did not, our author says, escape through the "fiery ordeal" quite "unscorched," was treated with comparative lenity.

"After his" (Pitt's) "examination, it was observed by Mr. Tooke's nephew, on their return from the court, 'that he had got Pitt down, and might have done more with him.' 'Yes, I might John,' was the reply, 'but never in my life did I choose to trample on a fallen foe.'"

We are not called to make any remark on those celebrated state prosecutions, in which a haughty, arbitrary, and vindictive administration were so notoriously deceived in their calculation and baffled in their design:—a defeat, however, which they took care to repay to the country and its liberties by a pernicious innovation on the fundamental laws relative to political crimes.

As to Horne Tooke, who was important and obnoxious enough to be, on a subsequent occasion, legislated against as an individual, nothing could be more complete than the triumph he obtained in this prosecution over all the calumniators who had charged him with anarchical principles. But, though gratified by this opportunity of taking his right ground, in sight of the nation, and pleased, in one view, to find that the administration of the law retained so much justice even toward men suspected and detested by the ruling powers, it appears, nevertheless, by the testimony of his biographer, and is sufficiently probable from the character of the man, that his satisfaction was not unmingled with an opposite sen-

timent with which very few persons will sympathize. Mr. Stephens says,

"I was assured by him, more than once, 'that he had been ever anxious to offer his life up as a sacrifice to his opinions;' and he appeared to me, toward the close of his existence, to be disappointed at the event, wishing rather to fall gloriously in what he considered to be the cause of the public, than perish ignominiously by the lapse of time or the pressure of disease."—vol. ii. p. 53.

We cannot follow out the narrative of his life, which was perhaps somewhat less eventful, though the account of it is still more interesting, in what may be called its last though very protracted stage, from about the age of sixty to that of seventy-seven. Its most marked events were, another most vigorous contest for the representation of Westminster, rendered famous in the records of political warfare by his humorous but most biting comments on the phrase "domestic enemies," employed by his opponent Sir Alan Gardner,—and his short occupation of a seat in the House of Commons for Old Sarum, an honour from the re-possession of which he was precluded, as is well known, by all the warlike formality of an act of parliament, which was levelled solely at him though it did not mention his name. During the short period of his privilege he was distinguished by the moderation, as much as by the good sense, of his speeches. And indeed, though in his addresses to the people at the Westminster election, and in the printed address in which, after being debarred any further admittance into the sanctuary at St. Stephen's, he seemed to fling that high honour with bitter scorn in the teeth of those who had decreed him incapable of it, there appears not the smallest diminution of the accustomed invective boldness, our author affirms that his trial had the effect of permanently modifying his language.

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The latter half of the second volume is a very entertaining miscellany. There is a rather long series of brief notices of distinguished men, of various ranks, accomplishments, and professions, who held an ac-

quaintance, more or less intimate, with Mr. Horne Tooke. It contains some curious anecdotes: but none, perhaps, more curious than the ugly one of Professor Porson's threatening, at Tooke's own table, to "*kick him and cuff him,*" and Tooke's insisting on their fighting out the quarrel in a "*couple of quarts of brandy,*" a kind of duel sufficiently to the Professor's taste, but which soon laid him senseless on the floor.

"On which the victor at this new species of *Olympic game*, taking hold of his antagonist's limbs in succession, exclaimed, 'This is the foot that was to have kicked, and the hand that was to have cuffed me!' and then drinking one glass more, to the speedy recovery of his prostrate adversary, ordered, 'that great care should be taken of Mr. Professor Porson;' after which he withdrew to the adjacent apartment, in which tea and coffee had been prepared, with the same seeming calmness as if nothing had occurred."

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A number of the particulars in the philosopher's domestic arrangements are strongly illustrative of what was peculiar in his character, while the details concerning the painful diseases which oppressed him severely during many of his latter years, give the highest possible idea of that most extraordinary strength of mind which would maintain in spite of them an animated and generally cheerful temper.

Horne Tooke was unquestionably one of the half dozen best talkers of his age; but Mr. Stephens was a very inferior Boswell; though he has given a few tolerably good things from the notes which he says he was several years in the habit of making of conversations in which he heard Horne Tooke display himself. It is not so much, however, the smart or fine sayings that he seems to have recorded, as his grave opinions on questions, books, and men. Judgments are pronounced on several distinguished writers of this and other countries; brief notices are recorded of discussions or dictates on points of literature, politics, law, history, agriculture, and a still wider extent of subjects, on which it would have been highly interesting and improving to hear this powerful thinker exert his acuteness and display his

knowledge. A number of these fragments and relics retain a measure of the luminous appearance which we can well believe to have been very striking in the complete original exhibition.

If in conversation Horne was oftener allowed to dictate than compelled to argue, it was not his fault, as no man ever more promptly welcomed a challenge to debate; and the more powerful his opponent the more he was gratified. He had a constitutional courage hardly ever surpassed, a perfect command of his temper, all the warlike furniture and efficiency of prompt and extreme acuteness, satiric wit in all its kinds and degrees, from gay banter to the most deadly mordacity, and all this sustained by inexhaustible knowledge, and indefinitely reinforced, as his life advanced, by victorious exertion in many trying situations. Such a man would be made a despot whether he would or not, by the obsequiousness of those who were either by choice or necessity placed in his immediate sphere; and it would depend on his temper whether he would be a tyrant.

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He had a manner, it seems—a Sultanic look—which could instantly impose the silence of death if he willed any matter of inquiry to be made an end of. There is one instance of this which appears somewhat mysterious and somewhat foolish. The conversation had been about Junius. He had laughed at some of the claims to the honour of being that personage;

“One of the company now asked if he knew the author. On the question being put, he immediately crossed his knife and fork on his plate, and assuming a stern look, replied ‘I do!’ His manner, tone, and attitude were all too formidable to admit of any further interrogatories.”

We are at a loss to conceive what there could be in the question to bring up all this majesty, and it seems rather a pitiable pusillanimity that durst not say one word to maintain the innocence of asking it, and even following it up with a second.

Mr. Stephens allows that, notwithstanding his hero’s zealous habitual love of truth, he would sometimes, in

disregard of it, fight for mere victory; a very superfluous expense of ammunition, it may be thought, to give it no worse character, in a man whose actual belief and unbelief included so many things to be maintained in hostility to prevailing opinions. A worse thing, however, than the folly of the practice was its immorality; and yet it is this, we presume, that the biographer means to extenuate by adding, as if it were an unquestionable proposition, this most thoughtless solecism,—“the ablest and BEST of men frequently fight, like gladiators, for fame, without troubling themselves much as to the justice of the cause.”

It would be but impertinent, however, to affect to call such a character as that of John Horne Tooke to account for this or the other particular culpability. It would be something like attending to criticize the transactions of a Pagan temple, and excepting to one rite as ungraceful, perhaps, and to another practice as irreverent; like as if the *substance* of the service were of a quality to deserve that its particular parts should be corrected. His whole moral constitution was unsound, from the exclusion, as far as can be judged from this work, or as there are any other means of judging, of all respect to a future account, to be given to the Supreme Governor. Towards the conclusion of his life, he made calm and frequent references to his death, but not a word is here recorded expressive of anticipations beyond it. The unavoidable inference from the whole of these melancholy memorials is, that he reckoned on the impunity of eternal sleep. Not, however, that he was willing to acknowledge any obligations to that protective economy; for he is known to have insisted, in a tone of the utmost confidence, in a very serious conversation not very long before his death, that if *there should* be a future life and retribution, he, of all men, had no reason to be afraid of it, for that he had even greater merit than could be required for his acquittal before a just Judge. The grand rule of moral excellence, even according to the gospel, he observed, was, to do to others as we would they should do to us; but *he* had gone much beyond this.

From Mr. Stephens's record it would not appear that he would very often formally and gravely talk on religion, though he would advert to it in the incidental way of satire and *swearing*. One particular conversation is alluded to in which his opinions were more disclosed than on any other remembered occasion. But with the nature of these avowed opinions the readers were not to be entrusted, further than some trifling hints, by implication, that he was not a polytheist !— In one conversation, not long before his death, he enlarged on the divine goodness, as manifest in the constitution of the world, and as having been amply experienced by himself. He maintained a wonderful serenity, a very signally philosophic tone, amidst his complicated and often oppressive bodily sufferings. At one time, however, it appears he consented to live only in compliance with the entreaties of his friends, having, as it seems, determined to withdraw himself from the burden by declining all sustenance.

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He advanced to the close of his life with a self-complacent mixture of pride and gaiety. A thoughtful religious reader will accompany him with a sentiment of deep melancholy, to behold so keen, and strong, and perverted a spirit, triumphant in its own delusions, fearlessly passing into the unknown world.

In closing this article, and wishing we knew how to apologize for its unpardonable prolixity, we are bound to repeat that, as a political man, we think it evident that Horne has experienced the utmost degree of injustice ; that his speculations and projects were moderate, that they uniformly aimed at the public good, that they were maintained with a consistency which put most of his distinguished contemporaries to shame, and that this very same inflexible consistency was a principal cause of the opprobrium with which time-serving politicians loaded him, in their own defence.

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[March, 1814.]

A New Directory for the Nonconformist Churches: Containing free Remarks on their Mode of Public Worship, and a Plan for the Improvement of it; with occasional Notes on various topics of general Interest to Protestant Dissenters. Respectfully addressed to Dissenting Ministers of all Denominations, and to Tutors of Academies. 8vo.

We are rather afraid that a considerable number of the practical Dissenters may be so incurious, or uninformed in the history of their own portion of the Christian Church, that the accidental sight of this title, in one or other of the numerous vehicles of literary advertisement, may have failed to suggest to them any distinct idea, or put them on any inquiry. Is it too much to surmise, with respect to more than a small proportion of them, that they have so very cursorily looked over the records of the religious transactions of the seventeenth century, that they will not recollect very readily and distinctly, on seeing the term Directory, that a work bearing that title was drawn up by the Assembly of Divines in 1644, and in the following year enjoined by two ordinances authoritatively on the nation, in substitution to the Book of Common Prayer, by the parliament that supplanted the monarchy? This appointment was made under the disapprobation of the true Dissenters, the Independents, and the substitution was enforced in a spirit very little befitting the vindicators of liberty. The nature of the new institution is thus stated by Fuller:

“The Parliament intending to abolish the Liturgy, and loath to leave the land altogether at a loss, or deformity in public service, employed the Assembly in drawing up a Model of Divine Worship. Herein no direct form of prayer, *verbis conceptis*, was prescribed, no outward or bodily worship enjoined, nor the people required in the Responsals (more than in Amen) to bear a part in the service; but all was left to

the discretion of the Minister, not enjoined *what*, but directed to *what purpose*, he ought to order his devotions, in public prayer and administering sacraments."

Without a recollection of this circumstance, the non-conformist of the present day, in casually reading the title of the "New Directory," will not be able to conjecture the nature and extent of the favour that is going to be conferred on him,—if he pleases. We say, if he pleases,—because the reverend editors of this performance have really judged it necessary to say, in so many words, that they "can pretend to no such ecclesiastical *authority* as they [the Assembly of Divines] exercised;"—so many things can authors deem it not impertinent to tell the public, when they are talking about themselves!

As far as we can learn, but a small measure of attention, favourable or malign, has been excited by this performance. It is almost needless to say that the authors of it represent nobody; that neither the Dissenters collectively, nor any assignable portion or number of them, have any privity, concurrence, or concern in the project it puts forth; that the Dissenters have as little recognition of their plans as knowledge of their persons. Their challenge of public attention is, in point of authority, purely and solely that of a few individuals who, gratified, and perhaps surprised, at obtaining one another's sanction in a judgment opposite to the notions and practice of the general body of Dissenters; have been inspirited to join in a small literary adventure, by way of experiment on the ecclesiastical temperament of the times. It would, therefore, be abundantly ludicrous if any zealous advocate of conformity, seizing with ignorant eagerness on this publication of the opinion of three, or six, or ten, unknown individuals, should have gravely taken the circumstance for a very striking and symptomatic event; and assuming this little back-parlour junta to be a sort of organ, or representative, or at least a genuine sample, of the vast crowd of the Dissenters, should have gone off in pompous and exulting celebration and felicitation of the hopeful progress of the present nonconformists in their return, after so long an

aberration, toward the venerable ordinances for devotion in the established Church. Previously to its actual exhibition, we should with difficulty have imagined the possibility of the co-existence of such simplicity with learning, rhetoric, and argumentative cleverness. Or if such a celebration were rather meant for banter than made in serious credulity, it would only serve to show that even a joke is too heavy a thing to be sustained without some basis of truth.

We think there is something rather bordering on the ludicrous on the other hand also, in the manner in which these unknown authors deliver the results of their consultations. They affect indeed an unassuming language, but they cannot divest themselves of a certain air of importance and responsibility; they have been regularly fortifying themselves in the consciousness of right intention, against an apprehended multitude of censures; they seem to reckon on exciting no small share of the public curiosity and inquisition; but such has been their caution, that they can confidently defy, like Junius, the keenest activity of suspicious inquiry.

Though, perhaps, no very serious harm could threaten them from a discovery, yet it may be allowed to have deserved some little management to elude the direct and personal application of the *ridicule* that they might expect to draw upon themselves, by a grave attempt to persuade the general body of the Dissenters into the partial use of written forms in their public worship: for this is the leading object of the New Directory.

We have nothing at all to do with the question of preferableness between set forms and extemporary prayer. It is not within the limits of our office to say one word for or against forms. We are not called to express any opinion, even, on the question, whether the Dissenters would not improve their religious economy by wholly changing their practice, and adopting a complete liturgy, substantially that of the established Church, or one cast in any other form. But we are at liberty to give vent to our extreme wonder, that any knot of sensible men should have judged it worth while to expend their

labours on a project so perfectly chimerical as that of bringing the general practice of the Dissenters into even that approach toward a liturgy which they have so gravely recommended.

There is no misrepresentation in our saying, "the general practice;" for the work is plainly and indiscriminately addressed to the Dissenters at large; though there is a passage in the preface that, at first view, would have seemed to imply a more restricted extension of the intended benefit.

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It is but a small portion of space we can allot to this performance; but, having so freely charged it with absurdity in its main design, notwithstanding our perception and most willing acknowledgment of the good sense manifested in some parts of it, we ought perhaps to give a very brief abstract, with a marked notice of some things to which the serious attention of the Dissenters may very justly be demanded.

A chapter of Introductory Observations on the different Modes of Worship, begins, in a style dry and heavy beyond all example, by stating the divided opinion of Protestants between liturgies and extemporary prayer, and declaring against the enforcement of either mode exclusively. The first passage that forcibly arrested our attention was that which cites the experience of Dissenters themselves, in evidence of the disadvantages of an entire exclusion of written forms.

"It may easily be conceived to be a very arduous service for any, but especially for young ministers, and such as are not endowed with some very considerable talents, constantly to lead the devotions of the same congregation in the extemporary method; and it must be naturally apprehended, that such as labour under peculiar modesty and self-diffidence, will be liable, at least on some occasions, to have their minds discomposed, and consequently to feel their devotion interrupted.

"Nor is this merely an imaginary supposition: many well-known facts have occurred to confirm the justice of it. Some respectable ministers, principally on account of the difficulty of conducting the worship of dissenting congregations in the usual mode, have been induced to conform to the Established Church. Others, who had conscientious objections against the terms of conformity, have entirely quitted the ministerial office; and not a few who have continued in it

have been known, on the same account, often to enter the pulpit with fear and trembling.

"Some again, by reason of their dissatisfaction, or that of their people, with the extemporary mode of prayer, (though they have acquitted themselves as well as most of their brethren,) have been induced to adopt a Liturgy: and on this ground several Liturgies have of late years been drawn up for dissenting congregations. But a great number of dissenting ministers, from a dislike of Liturgies, have sought the relief they wanted by drawing up forms of prayer for themselves, and committing them to memory. While others, who have composed the like Forms, have preferred the READING of them, which has of late been a growing custom."—p. 5.

Now we would ask; what would be the probable impression, what would even be the fair impression, of this statement on a perfect stranger to the actual state of the dissenting ministry? Would it not be nearly this,—that there is among them a very extensively prevailing dissatisfaction with the extemporary mode; that a large proportion of them feel this the most onerous part of the service, and would be glad if dissenting custom would allow them to have recourse to written forms;—that considerable numbers are intimidated from the ministry by this dreaded exercise;—that in short, there is a very extensive feeling of distress for the want of some aid of the nature of a liturgy? We do not know whether the authors would accept this translation and interpretation of their language, but we think this is not more than the import which that language would convey to an uninformed inquirer. And we must take the liberty to say; that if this be the intended view of the matter, the representation is assuredly fallacious. There is one small and not increasing denomination of Dissenters, the ministers of which, it is understood, are very generally in the use of set forms of prayer. To this denomination, the reader will fancy he perceives cause to surmise, that the writers of the New Directory are considerably partial; and he may be led to suspect it is among this denomination that they have met with most of their instances of dissenting ministers so frightened, oppressed, and disabled, by the task of extemporary public prayer;—a thing very unaccountable, if such were the fact; since they boast of a great superiority to other sects in

intellectual cultivation, and will hardly acknowledge an inferiority in piety. Setting aside this small division of the dissenting ministry, we have the most perfect conviction, derived from a rather extensive acquaintance with the class, that no such feelings as the above representation attributes are prevalent among them ; and that the individuals who experience the distressing difficulty here described, and are wishing the relief of written forms for either the whole or part of their public worship, are so exceedingly diminutive a minority, (if they are even enow to be recognized under any collective term) as to create but an impalpable and imperceptible diversity in the great body. The hearing of the representation made with such officious generosity and compassion by these New Directors, would be very apt,—together with a degree of surprise which it would excite—to raise an emotion, we will not say akin to scorn of this unsought and half-synodical kind of benevolence, but certainly a feeling that these public-spirited elders must have conceived an unaccountable disgust at the more immediately offering and feasible class of utilities, to go so far out of their way for an object of exertion. By the generality of the dissenting ministers, no question on the subject of written forms is ever for a moment entertained with any view to the determination of their own practice. They habitually regard them as things belonging to a quite foreign system, with which they have no concern. The aid of such forms is no more apt to be suggested to their thoughts as a commodious expedient, than the benefit of crutches is likely to strike the fancy of people who walk in the ordinary way. For one of their own fraternity (excepting, always, the small sect we have before alluded to) to begin to use such artificial aids, would only appear to them a whimsical singularity ; or an apeing of the establishment, into which they would be heard to observe it might be the fittest for that individual to *dissent* from them altogether ; or an indication of exceedingly questionable competency for his office. If they ought to be restrained by candour from imputing, so readily and so generally as they are said to do, an incompetence to the independent exercise of

public prayer to the established clergy, whose form of service withholds their ability in this respect from the proof; they, obviously, cannot avoid judging of the individuals of their own class, as their ability, or, to use their own word, gift, is actually brought to a test; and therefore they would necessarily form a humble estimate of the endowments of a minister who should be driven to the resource of written forms by the dread and difficulty of that extemporary exercise which is performing with apparent facility by thousands of his class. And how did it elude the understanding of these New Directors, that the dissenting ministers are likely to partake too much of the ordinary qualities of human nature, to leave any probability of finding many of them sufficiently heroic in humility to be willing to subject themselves to this estimate and comparison? Verily these gentlemen are deep in the knowledge of man and of ministers; for they exhort Brother Simon to a practical acknowledgment that he is not able to pray more than five minutes in a manner fit to be heard, while Brother Timothy, in the same town or neighbourhood, is admired for the fluency and variety which he can prolong for half an hour. That a partial adoption of forms, (excepting in the case of persons confessedly leaning toward, though not uniting with, the establishment, or persons desirous to share its genteel respectability in the world) would really be thus regarded as the resource of incapacity, is beyond all doubt; unless this little council of reformers can, in the first instance, persuade into the practice a considerable number of the Dissenters of most acknowledged ability, and of the most decidedly nonconformist principles. And when they shall have effected this last object, their cause of self-congratulation will be, that they have contracted the range, and impoverished the variety, of a free and inventive devotion, and have partly reduced those who can pray the best, and have not very long to pray, into the readers of forms!

Extemporary public prayer has, then, by long and general usage, confirmed by opinion, whether correct or

erroneous, been made to constitute so much of the practical essence of the dissenting system ; and an inability for the performance of it, in one manner or another, has been so uniformly regarded as a total disqualification ; that among the main body of the dissenting ministry there has not been, and will not be, the smallest deliberation on the matter. But it is not merely this established practice, and this universal requisition of a competence to maintain it, together with whatever of seriously thoughtful conviction there may be in its favour, and whatever of illiberal prejudice against the mode of the Established Church,—it is not from these causes alone, that the Dissenters may be expected to regard with great indifference the project here offered to their acceptance. It is in vain for these or any other reformers to think of reasoning them out of their knowledge of the plain matter of fact ; that there is among them a very large measure of competence, in some sense of the word, to perform their public services without the proposed assistance. Whatever might be, on a collective view, a fair estimate of the *quality* of their devotional exercises, it is perfectly evident that they have in general such a facility in them as would appear very wonderful to an observer that did not consider how many causes contribute to it. Our authors represent, in terms of wide implication, the dread, the shrinking, the harassing sensations of toil, and the embarrassment, inflicted on dissenting ministers in the expectation and performance of the service ; and in their preface they give an ingenuous hint that they have had personal experience of the evils they are going to describe. Their information and candour ought not to have been so sunk in the effort to make out a strong case, as to prevent an explicit acknowledgment, that this account of pains and penalties represents the condition of but a very inconsiderable number of the fraternity, after the earliest stage of their public labours ; in which stage it is no great evil if they are constrained to the more serious exertion, and repressed into the more humility, by feeling the anxiety and difficulty which are to be encountered by beginners in all important employ-

ments. The arduous exertion required and compelled for surmounting these salutary difficulties of the initiatory and probationary season, is ten-fold repaid by the public self-possession and facility to which they often lead. But if, after the pressure and exertion of the earlier periods of the exercise have been undergone, there continues to be felt, habitually and permanently, in public extemporary prayer, a burden and a distress, greatly beyond that strong and solicitous effort of the faculties which may justly be exacted by a solemn employment, it is in some of the following cases ;—that of a few persons so severely afflicted with what we commonly call nervous affections that they regard all their public duties, their preaching quite as much as their praying, with oppressive apprehension ; or that of those,—would there were none such !—whose minds are so much estranged from the grand interests of their vocation, and from its appropriate reading and study, that they are not at home in the trains of thought adapted to prayer ; or of those whose hopeless incapacity renders them equally unfit for each of the duties of the ministerial office. With respect to the two latter of these descriptions, we think the dissenters would do unwisely to encourage them in the use, if they were inclined to it, of artificial helps for continuing more at their ease in an office from which they should be exhorted to retire.

Take these classes out, and the great majority of the dissenting ministry will remain : and we can hazard nothing in affirming of them that they are so competent, in point of *facility*, to the exercise of extemporary prayer, and so perfectly and experimentally satisfied of it, that our authors might as reasonably, for any probability of success, have recommended their emigration, in a body, to a distant part of the globe, as their adoption of the mode proposed in the New Directory.—We will notice, in as few words as we can, some of the causes, quite obvious ones indeed, from which this prevailing facility very naturally arises.

It is almost unnecessary to observe that the persons who become ministers among the Dissenters, are not destined

by their relatives to the employment from their earliest years; if we partly except just here and there an individual, to whose juvenile inclinations it has been the systematic, though perhaps unavowed, endeavour of parents to give that direction. They are brought into the service, therefore, by what may be called a law of selection, an adjudgment of fitness, in that portion of religious society to which they are the best known, sanctioning their own wishes, and sometimes preceding and prompting them. This fitness is recognized in a very decidedly and therefore unusually religious character of the mind and deportment, combined with a somewhat more than quite ordinary ability of producing and conveying thoughts on religious topics.*

The way in which this piety and this faculty have almost always been first brought out into formal exercise, is social prayer. In some dissenting congregations a few serious young people agree to hold a weekly meeting for prayer, in a rather retired manner, with an exclusion, in favour of the diffidence of their first essays, of their elder friends and of strangers. Whatever may be thought of the discretion of such meetings, there can be no question respecting their effect on whatever portion of talent may happen to be there. The serious youth is sometimes persuaded to take the leading part in family worship, when the master of the family is absent. In his visits to religious relatives at a distance, if his religious disposition be decidedly known, he is invited, perhaps even too importunately pressed, to perform the same service, which is quite, of course, an extemporary one. Among the dissenters there are a great number of prayer-meetings, so far public that any one may attend them, some of them having in view merely the general cultivation of piety, and some of them, (as, for instance, the monthly meetings, denominated missionary prayer

* Our dissenting readers will excuse the very measured and moderate terms in which we speak of their demand of the proofs of talent in the young men whose inclination to the ministry they countenance or incite, as it is notorious that they have too often been fully as moderate in this part of their requisition.

meetings, so very extensively in use of late years,) instituted for more special objects of religious interest. At these, any serious young man who has given indications of ability for extemporary prayer is sure to be invited to the exercise; and if he should, from diffidence, decline it, it is very possible he shall be rebuked in private by some of his zealous friends for his want of zeal or courage. Probably he is sometimes induced, or directly requested, to visit a poor sick neighbour, and seldom thinks of coming away without first praying with the sufferer, some of whose family also are likely to be present at the exercise. We might have mentioned earlier in the series that among the dissenters it is not unusual, when two or three families meet merely to pass a social evening, for their separating to be preceded by a prayer, which will sometimes be the amicable contribution required from such a young man, if there be such a one among them.—There may happen to be a very particular want for some one to relieve occasionally the labours of the minister, by going perhaps, on a Sunday evening, to deliver a short discourse to a company of the inhabitants of some neighbouring village, assembled in one of those licensed rooms of which the dissenters have so vast and increasing a number: a considerable part of his employment on such an occasion is still extemporary prayer.—If at length he goes to an academy, he has there sometimes to pray in a more imposing company, that of his tutors and fellow-students. When he begins to be sent out in the full avowed capacity of preacher, this same duty pertinaciously adheres to him, in the public assembly, and probably in the private house in which he may be hospitably detained till next day.

Thus during the early years of his life, and previously to his taking his fixed station, he has, very possibly, performed the exercise in question the greater part of a thousand times, and in innumerable varieties of circumstance and situation. And after he enters fully on the destined field of his labours, the occasions on which the office recurs upon him, besides his regular pulpit

service, are, if he is of an active temperament, numerous and diversified beyond calculation.

Now if it be allowed only that the average native faculty of the dissenting ministers amounts to a decent mediocrity, it would be most marvellous if the discipline through all this unlimited exercise did not bring them to a high degree of self-possession and readiness. Nor is any such exception to the general law of cause and effect found in the matter: they do *in point of fact* realize the natural result of the unindulgent process of their training. And when we consider what value men are always disposed to set on accomplishments that have been laboriously acquired; what real and definable advantages are actually afforded by the talent in question in the diversified ministry of religion; and, (to advert again to the infirm side of human nature,) what sentiments may arise, at less devout and humble seasons, in glancing at the contrast between this talent and the qualifications of persons who reputedly or certainly do not possess it, though engaged in substantially the same vocation;—when we reflect on all this, we are again seized with amazement at the stubborn gravity with which this new self-constituted council insists on the partial abandonment of such a vantage ground. If any further advice or injunctions of the same nature are in preparation to be issued, they will do wisely to bend all the force of their charitable effort on youths who are quite in the early and timorous stage of the preparatory progress; for they may rest assured they can do nothing with either the veterans or the youthful proficient of the self-willed tribe which they have been so unluckily beguiled into a notion of reforming.

In the above paragraphs we have performed, we confess with much less compression than we hoped, the substance of what we conceived to be our task with respect to this publication. There cannot well be a great deal more to be said of a book, after it is convicted of the folly of an utter impracticability in its main design. It is but fair, nevertheless, to notice briefly some of the matters brought in evidence of the wisdom and necessity

of the project ; and also to quote the passages which express the precise nature of the proposed reform. Indeed, it should have been sooner stated how much less it is than a formal liturgy that they wish to introduce. They express themselves rather strongly against the entire preclusion of extemporary prayer ; and but little approve of forms of the minister's own composition, whether committed to memory to be recited, or simply read.

* * * * *

Having enounced their plan, they leave it a while to exert its own unassisted attractions on the one side, as it were, of the reader's mind, while they proceed to ply him most stoutly on the other, with whatever of the evils incident to exclusive extemporary prayer admit of the most repulsive representation. And this is managed in a way that merits commendation, in the same sense in which our Lord "commended" the cunning steward. The quiet fair-speech profession of the title of the section is to state—"the Disadvantages of an invariable use of extemporary prayer ;" and the reader, in his simplicity, naturally expects a statement, a strong one of course, of the disadvantages inseparable from this mode of prayer, by its very nature, and therefore impossible to be avoided or remedied. But the little synod, truly artful for once, and perhaps desirous, by a stimulant and inspiriting regale, to give the reader an impetus that should insure his being carried quite to the end of the book, have fallen on the more efficient expedient of enumerating and exposing the actual faults and follies of their weaker brethren. And this they have done, not, certainly, in terms importing literally that those faults and follies, in a gross degree, are general among dissenting ministers ; each allegation is introduced by such expressions as "some of them," "instances have occurred," and the like : but still there is not sufficient care taken to prevent the imputation from falling very extensively ; the representation is so made that (a reader knowing only just enough of the Dissenters to be prejudiced against them, would be very likely to take it as descriptive of the prevailing character of the nonconformist public

worship. And if he did, what might he reasonably think of the taste, and anticipate of the religious cultivation, of what, according to Lord Harrowby's statements and documents, either is or is likely soon to become a majority of the people attending public worship in the land, —when he reads such passages as the following.

* * * * *

Now we repeat, that this professedly well-wishing lecture of reprehension is made in a manner which exempts the dissenters from all manner of obligations of gratitude. There may indeed be found such a sentence as this: "we are far from charging our brethren in general, especially those of a liberal education, with the improprieties which we have noticed." A very few expressions like this might have been enough for complaisance amidst the freedom and confidence of fraternity, if in composing a book for publication they could have been addressing the Dissenters exclusively of all other listeners. In the slight generality and brevity of their commendatory expressions they might then have been understood as saying, in effect,—“We have met one another, not to establish the proof or celebrate the praise of our excellencies; a very superfluous thing indeed at any time, as we none of us need an increase of our self-complacency; at any rate we have a different business just now, the specific business of taking account of our faults in order to correct them. We may rely on mutual good opinion and the firm partiality of all of us to our class, enough to waive compliments for the present, and deal about only a little wholesome and not very palatable truth.” But these candid reformers well knew, that in writing a book which should expose whatever could be found of most defective or absurd in the dissenting worship *as conducted by the inferior class of its performers*, they were writing what would be read by nobody with so much avidity as by the enemies of nonconformity, and by the enemies of religion; of whose extremely slight knowledge, in general, of the religious services of the Dissenters they were also aware. They well knew that a civil expression or two, affecting to acquit the main

body of the arraigned class of the charges exhibited with such elaborate aggravation, would not have the smallest effect on such readers ; who would be sure to congratulate themselves on having obtained at last, from very good authority, a description comprehensively applicable to the class, and just such a description as it is gratifying to believe. This consequence could not be even in part prevented, these authors will know, without the most explicit, and even repeated and amplified declarations, that such a conversion of particular charges against a portion of the class into a general estimate of its qualifications collectively, would be to incur a complete imposition on the judgment,—that there is, in the whole amount, an extremely large and continually augmenting measure of intelligence and propriety displayed in public extemporary prayer,—that there are many dissenting ministers distinguished for their excellence in the practice,—that a very great proportion of them maintain a respectable propriety,—that a considerable number really show their faculties to the most advantage in that employment,—that some who are chargeable with some of the faults alleged, manifest, nevertheless, a considerable share, on the whole, of sense and devout sentiment,—and that the very gross offenders form but a small proportion of the class. This is what these gentlemen have *not* done. And the impression which, through this omission, will be made on uninformed and prejudiced readers, will be confirmed by the universality of the terms in which the remedy is proposed : no minister, it would seem, is held competent to perform the public devotional services quite satisfactorily without the auxiliary expedient. Such an impression may be further confirmed by the curious sort of caution with which these writers have ventured to assert the possibility, the bare possibility, of excellence in extemporary prayer. In hazarding the assertion they have thought it necessary to look abroad into history for examples ; and they have found in the last age (something less than the number of splendid comets) *two* examples, Dr. Watts and Mr. Hugh Farmer !

Whatever, therefore, the Dissenters may think of the

plan itself, we should suppose they will feel much contempt of the spirit and manner in which the benevolent service has been performed. The authors are to look for their thanks from another quarter. And they may have perceived already, in the most marked act of public attention with which they are likely to be honoured, how gladly and kindly they will be received by the avowed and consistent enemies of nonconformity in all its parts, as witnesses against their brethren, and hopeful pupils of the higher schools ;—still objects of condescending compassion, nevertheless, on account of that dimness of incipient sight which as yet but perceives “men as trees walking.”

Having said thus much, as honestly due, we think, to the Dissenters, and as fairly within those limits of our office which exclude ecclesiastical polemics (and we are glad of the exemption conferred by this exclusion) we should be deficient in benevolence toward the fraternity so ungenerously treated in this performance, if we did not earnestly recommend to their perusal the part of it that deserves this very charge. They must not be allowed to fancy that there is not great room for amendment in the manner of the extemporary devotions of many among them. The faults which these worthy *friends* of theirs have depicted, as if just for a show to entertain the Philistines, do certainly exist among them to a considerable extent. We have now and then ourselves, in straying into some of their meeting-houses had for a short time some sensations awakened, akin to those that seem to have been prolonged into a continual qualmishness in these delicate divines: but we happened to have more knowledge than they choose to own, as well as more candour than they possess, respecting the general and collective quality of the dissenting public services. That quality, however, estimated collectively, might, we submit, be very materially improved in consequence of a serious and impartial attention to the first and third part of this same New Directory.

With regard to the “Remedy,” as our authors denominate it, we have shown that it will not be adopted ;

but if it would, we can see no great good it would do, though it is set forth in nearly the usual confident terms of the projector, or the advertiser of a panacea. Forms are to be composed of passages of scripture, drawn together according to the minister's judgment of their adaptedness to combine. A number of these are to be written or printed, and read as a part of the public prayer, the other portion being still extemporary. It seems not to have occurred to these projectors, that the length of this extemporary portion would remain completely at the discretion of the person performing it, and that the weak and ill-judging man will be very sure to make it long enough to admit all the faults from which it is the very purpose of the contrivance to save him. Indeed such a man will be extremely likely, as we have before observed, to reject the assistance altogether, with peculiar disdain. The reformers should either, on the one hand, have aimed at precluding all possibility of the evils complained of by recommending an entire liturgy,—which considering the habits and opinions of the Dissenters, would have been as hopeful a proposal as the one they have actually made,—or on the other, have been content to urge the improvement by all possible means, of extemporary prayer, exposing, of course, its most prominent existing imperfections. This exposure they have made; and we would warn the Dissenters not to suffer the ungracious manner in which it is made, to provoke them into the folly of rejecting the benefit they may derive from it.

[May, 1814.]

The Philosophy of Nature; or, the Influence of Scenery on the Mind and Heart. Post 8vo., 2 vols.

It may be asserted that there is a relation between the human mind and the whole known creation: in other words, that there are some principles of correspondence in the constitution of the mind, and in the constitutions of all known created things, in consequence of which, those things are adapted to produce some effect on the mind when they are presented to it, whether through the medium of the senses, or in any more immediately intellectual manner.* It may be added, perhaps, that if the condition of the mind were absolutely and perfectly good, this effect would always be beneficial.

As the mind must, in all periods and regions of its existence, receive its happiness from causes exterior to itself, and as it is probable the one Supreme Cause of that happiness, the Deity, will make a very great part of the happiness which human spirits are to receive from him, come to them through the medium of his works, it is a matter of inexpressible exultation, that those works are so stupendous in multiplicity and magnitude; that they are, indeed, for all practical purposes, infinite. It is with a triumphant emotion, that an aspiring spirit, assured of living for ever, trusting in the divine mercy that it shall be happy in that eternity of life, and certain that its happiness must arise from the impressions made on it by surrounding existences,—it is with an emphatic emotion of triumph that such a spirit considers the vastness of the universe, as progressively demonstrated to us by the advances of science, and

* Such as some modes of inspiration.

as attempted to be realized by an earnest, a delightful, but still an overwhelmed effort of imagination. For it regards the infinity of things as the scene of its indefatigable and everlasting activity, in which it shall find that millions of contemplated manifestations of beauty and sublimity are but preparing it to advance to new visions, with perceptions for ever becoming more vivid, and delight for ever growing more intense.

A spirit of this order will regard the ample display of beauty and magnificence made even to the inhabitants of this globe, as forming a kind of introductory stage for the indulgence and exercise of curiosity and admiration ; and as adapted, in combination with the objects of religious faith, to operate on the conformation and habitudes of the mind with an influence not less salutary than pleasing. This admirer of the Creator's works will, indeed, be sometimes compelled to regret the feebleness of the senses by means of which the soul is reduced to receive its perceptions of creation ; will sometimes be tempted to deplore the inferiority of the terrestrial region itself to such worlds as he can easily imagine to exist ; and will much oftener lament, that even of this sublunary scene, he is, by many causes, confined to contemplate, immediately with his own faculties of perception, an extremely diminutive portion, and perhaps of an immensely inferior character, in point of beauty and sublimity, to many other portions of it ; yet he will, nevertheless, be arrested and delighted by many phenomena ; will often lose himself in inquisition and wonder ; and, on the whole, will be sensible that nature greatly affects the habitual state of his mind.

Such a description is applicable, however, to a very small number, comparatively, of the human race. This captivation of nature is felt by extremely few but highly cultivated minds, and, indeed, by the smaller proportion only even of them. Here and there, a rare individual who has received from nature an extraordinary measure of imagination and sensibility, feels the enchanting influence in the early years of life, antecedent to the high cultivation of the faculties ; and onward through life,

though the full means and advantages of that discipline should never be enjoyed. But it is notorious that the generality of men are exempt. Savages are quite insensible to the beautiful or the awful aspect of the scenes in which they are pursuing their occupations of hunting, fishing, and war. They would stand without emotion on the precipice from which they would look down on the cataract of Niagara. Nor, perhaps, would the half-civilized Canadian hunter be betrayed, in the same situation, into any great excess of solemnity or enthusiasm. We remember the perfect sobriety of prose with which an American man of the woods, who was even capable of writing a book, Patrick Gass, has described or mentioned the great falls of the Missouri. The same want of what may be called poetical feeling, regarding the sublimities of scenery, is apparent in all the uncultivated and slightly cultivated nations, from the savage up to the confines of the civilized state; in the South Americans, the Tartars, the Laplanders, the Norwegians, and even the Icelanders,—excepting that some among these North European nations associate certain mysterious ideas of reverence and fear with their great mountains. We are not aware, that even in the inhabitants of Switzerland, an admiration of its grand scenery constitutes any material part of that passion for their country for which they are so celebrated. We need not say a word of the mass of the population of those regions, which combine the beauties of nature with the striking remains of the Grecian and Roman taste and magnificence. If we come, at last, to what assumes, and, indeed, we believe justly assumes, to be the most cultivated people on earth, we doubt whether we can make any striking improvement of the representation, as to the inspiring and elevating influence of nature, and the number and enthusiasm of her pupils. Of the several divisions of our territory and people, the country and posterity of Ossian have assumed greatly the highest character for influences exerted by the scenery and felt by the people. We have read, in close succession, Dr. Johnson's account of the region and the race, and

Mrs. Grant's : a conjunction and comparison which reminded us of the description given by travellers of the flowery tracts immediately on the edge of the eternal ice on the lower declivities of the Alps. It would be delightful to receive Mrs. Grant's representation as the correct one ; and, therefore, we endeavour, with all our might, to believe in it ; nevertheless, we are visited by strong surmises of *unintentional* poetry in the lady's very interesting memorials of a national character, which, she confesses, is fast approaching to extinction. While we can conceive, and indeed admit, that there was in the character of the Highlanders, before the breaking up of their ancient social economy, something more imaginative, more perceptive of the gloomy sublimity of their scenery, more responsive, by solemn and elevated sentiments, to its aspects, than was perhaps ever to be found in any other uncultivated tribe inhabiting a similar region, it would yet be absurd to set substantially aside, in favour of this one race, the general law, that unexpanded faculties, undisciplined taste, scantiness of associated ideas, want of the means of judging of objects by comparison ;—in one word, that ignorance must inevitably preclude, in a great degree, that kind of sensibility and reflection by which the mind has its perception of the fair, the marvellous, and the sublime in nature. And, doubtless, the contemplative enthusiasm indulged on the mountains, among the rocks, by the torrents and cataracts, and on the sea shore, was confined to the few spirits of the family or the kindred of genius, while the great majority could behold such objects with only a little less temperance of emotion than the ordinary tone of sentiment among other rustic portions of mankind. Assuredly it was not every Highlander that gave out emanations of poetry while passing under impending precipices, or standing on the summits of mountains.

If we descend from that legendary, visionary, and almost vanished race, to the uncultivated population of England, Wales, and Ireland, there will need no other experiment than that of a short sojourn in Cumberland,

in Carnarvonshire, or near the lakes of Killarney, to estimate the influence of natural beauty and grandeur on the generality of the people placed under their habitual operation. And we apprehend that the investigator will be utterly disappointed if he expects to find any mental modification, corresponding to the nobleness of the scenes. He will find that the main proportion of their habitual spectators are not either consciously or unconsciously the subjects of their power. Not unconsciously; they have not acquired insensibly a richer imagination; they have not a more vivid sensibility to the sublime and beautiful generally, as elements in the constitution of the natural and moral world, and as displayed in literature and the arts. Not consciously: they are not haunted by the images of the grand peculiarities of the scene around them; their minds are not arrested and thrown into trains of thought by their aspect; they can pass long spaces of time without even distinctly recognizing them as objects to be thought of when they are seen, and still longer spaces without employing any of their leisure in visiting the spots (perhaps not far off) which are the most striking in themselves, or which afford the most commanding views of the wonders of the region. And if sometimes a party of pleasure is made up for such a visit, it is very commonly seen that the graces or the majesty of nature engage but very little of their attention, and that they scarcely at all, unless perhaps by augmented hilarity, affect the tone of their feelings. The looks, sometimes thrown vaguely over the scene, are evidently not such as to bring the soul in contact with it;

“ There is no speculation in those eyes.”

The lively talk about indifferent subjects, the freaks and frolic, the good or bad cheer, the little diverting or vexatious incidents, shall so besport away the hours and faculties, that the whole expedition might appear to have been planned as an insult on the goddess (that has had so many pretended worshippers, and so few true

ones) Nature, in the way of practically telling her how little all her fine things are good for.

Among a multitude of flights of rhapsody in the work that has led us into these observations, there is one in glorification of Snowdon, in which, after a great deal of probably real, and certainly reasonable enthusiasm, with an addition of what we suspect to be rhetorical affectation, it is asserted, without the compliment of looking round in anticipation of any body's scepticism, that "No one ever mounted this towering eminence but he became a wiser and a better man." And several particulars are specified, in which it is assumed as infallible, that this transforming energy must evince itself on a summit, which, it seems, is high enough to attract the influences of a heaven superior to that of the lightnings. This bold position imports at the very least, and as the minor part of the fact which it asserts, that every one who beholds what may be seen from that eminence, is profoundly affected by the magnificent vision. Now, we happen to have had plentiful evidence on the spot, that a number of human beings may look from that sublime position, on all that it commands, by the light of the rising sun, and be little more impressed and detained by the view than they would in standing to contemplate, on the busy day, the market place of any large town, and very much less than in surveying that area when filled with the exhibitions of a fair. As the rule must be, that the subsequent effects on the mind can only be in proportion to the force of the impression, it is not worth while to waste even a guess on the probable improvement in goodness, wisdom, or taste, derived by these spectators from a scene to which these islands, perhaps, do not afford an equal.

It is to the uncultivated portion of a nation which, nevertheless, accounts itself collectively more cultivated than all others, that we have mainly limited these observations. But whoever has had many opportunities of observing, with respect to the point in question, the much smaller portion that may make pretensions to be distinguished as cultivated, will have to testify that a

real, thoughtful perception, and a genuine, ardent, admiration, of the beautiful and sublime of nature, are among the very rarest endowments or acquirements of educated and well informed persons. His deposition will unquestionably be, that but very few among the elegant and polished part of the community, very few among the studious and learned, very few of those who are occupied in the higher professions, are intent observers of the material world, with the direct thought of its being the very basis and archetype of whatever we can know of the fair, the harmonious, and the grand ; with a direct wish and study, therefore, to have the economy of the mind, as to taste and imagination, and partly as to intellect itself, formed and modified in accordance to it ; and with a feeling that there is, through all nature, some mysterious element like soul, which comes, with a deep significance, to mingle itself with their own conscious being.

Nevertheless, there is a proportion of cultivated minds, (and we must reckon, inclusively or additionally, an extremely few spirits but slightly cultivated in a strictly literary sense, yet strongly instinct with genius) that find, in the wide field of nature, something indefinitely more than a mere indifferent ground on which to prosecute the journey and accomplish the ordinary business of life. They find it a scene marked all over with mystical figures, the prints and traces, as it were, of the frequentation and agency of superior spirits. They find it sometimes concentrating their faculties to curious and minute inspection, sometimes dilating them to the expansion of vast and magnificent forms ; sometimes beguiling them out of all precise recognition of material realities, whether small or great, into visionary musings, and habitually and in all ways conveying into the mind, trains and masses of ideas of an order not to be acquired in the schools, and exerting a modifying and assimilating influence on the whole mental economy.

Now a clear intellectual illustration of all this might fairly assume the title of " The Philosophy of Nature." Such a work would not, perhaps, have been required

to commence with the very elements of the philosophy of the mind, or an abstruse investigation into the principles of sublimity and beauty. It might, perhaps, not improperly begin with inferences from the striking and obvious fact, repeatedly dwelt on by philosophers and poets, that in the constitution of the material world, the Creator's intentions were much beyond a provision for mere necessity and plain utility, in the strict sense of those terms; that it was determined there should be, in the mundane economy for man, something besides the means of physical well-being, something besides moral order, and even religious truth: that the system was made to include a marvellous provision for taste and imagination, and for an infinity of pleasing emotions excited through the medium of these faculties. The comprehensive inference, capable of being established in several forms and illustrations, is plainly this, that the human mind should not be insensible to this signally remarkable part of the divine economy, but should be both passively and actively responsive to it.

A rapid general view might then be taken of the actual state of the human mind, past and present, as to its modes and degrees of sensibility to this grand circumstance in the Creator's work. It might be shown in what manner this sensibility has appeared to manifest itself in various nations, in the character of their philosophy and their superstitions, of their poetry and other fine arts. Such a survey would contribute to ascertain the influence of civilization in bringing this otherwise nearly dormant sensibility into an effective state. And it would, alas! too opprobriously show how easily this fine faculty may be perverted into superstition and idolatry. There would sometimes occur, during this review, the very remarkable fact, of this sensibility's acquiring, when converted into superstition, tenfold the poignancy it ever had before; tribes of human beings, who would have been but feebly impressed by the beauty and grandeur of nature in itself, or as a work of God, being enthusiastic for that beauty and sublimity just when, and so far as, profaned into the materials of

a false religion. Thus men obtained something like the accomplishment of the expectation of our first parents, a more vivid perception, by means of their sin, of what was fair and sublime.

The supposed work might inquire what class of the beauties, that may be comprehended within the wide term "scenery," may have had the greatest power over susceptible minds. And it might be shown how the different orders of genius are attracted and modified respectively by those different classes of nature's exhibitions.

It would be a matter of very great interest to determine, under what conditions, this influence of nature, where it does actually operate on the taste and imagination, shall also be salutary in a *moral* respect. It has been a favourite doctrine with many men of sensibility and genius, that these captivations of nature are absolutely and almost necessarily conducive to the moral rectitude of the mind; that they unconditionally tend to purify, to harmonize, and to exalt, the principles and the affections. If the maintainers of this opinion, so kind to our nature, had not examined the human mind enough to know, from its very constitution, that in some modes and degrees of its depravity, it not only may fail to be corrected by the perception of these charms of nature, but may receive their influence so that it shall augment the depravity,—it is strange that their faith was not shaken by the notorious fact, that many fine geniuses of the very class most alive to the beauty and sublimity of nature, poets and painters, have been among the most profligate of men;—not to notice that the inhabitants of some of the most paradisaical and romantic sections of the earth, are among the most basely corrupt of the whole human race. Let any man recollect what he has read and heard of the inhabitants of the most exquisite countries on the Mediterranean.

Another object of the supposed inquiry, would be to determine what mode of training from childhood, what kind of locality for residence, what studies and occupations, would most effectually dispose and gratify a

mind possessed of the requisite native sensibility, for feeling these finer influences of the material world. It would also be a very capital object to teach the art and habit of *observing* the scenery of nature ;—an instruction which might, with the greatest propriety, be accompanied by an emphatical censure of the careless stupidity of the man who can, for half a century, carry about the world a soul, accommodated with the organs of sight and hearing, and scarcely twenty times in that whole lapse of duration, fix an intense, examining, prolonged attention, on any of the innumerable displays exhibited in the elegance and grandeur of the creation.

It would be a gratifying and an easy part of the undertaking to show, chiefly by means of well-selected examples, the vast advantage to eloquence, and indeed to all serious, moral, and religious instruction,—derivable in the form of striking analogies, happy illustrations, and a diction full of colour and life,—from having the prodigious world without the mind, brought, in its representative imagery, to be an ideal world, almost as rich, within it.

In the last place, it would be proper, in some part of such a work, to caution men of genius, who both perceive the palpable material beauty and grandeur of the creation, and feel, in the contemplation, the influence as of some more refined and ideal element, far beyond the perception of the senses, against suffering themselves to be deluded into a notion that this abstracted and elevated mode of feeling is something so analogous to *religion* as to render it of less importance to attain that distinct and diviner sentiment. The fine enthusiasm of this feeling made some ancient, and has made some modern philosophers, content with acknowledging, as supreme in the universe, some kind of all-pervading spirit, *less than a real intelligence*. And among certain modern poets, we have heard of a mystical spiritualization of the earth and the heavens, which, under the denomination of *physiopathy*, was to be regarded as the most refined mode of religion, and peculiarly adapted to the most subtle and purified human spirits, though it was

less than an acknowledgment of absolute intelligence in the object adored !—It is not, however, against this that we particularly mean the caution ; but against the delusion, in minds firmly believing in a God, of the self-flattery that being exceedingly enchanted and elevated in contemplating his works, must, of itself, necessarily be, in effect, identical with devotion towards Him.

These paragraphs may serve as a slight rudimental suggestion of the topics of an investigation which, in proper hands, might be interesting and valuable ;—most eminently so, if it were possible to compel to such a task, for instance, one genius that, more than any other, has sojourned on that frontier, where the material and the ideal worlds join and combine their elements ; that has seen those elements, as it were, mutually interfused, in a state of assimilation more intimate than mere analogy.—It may not have been with a very sanguine hope of finding such a service performed that we took up the present work ; we did, however, reckon on a certain measure of systematic and continuous investigation ; but we soon perceived that the lively author was not at all enamoured of regular and hard labour. We found he had been injudicious rather than intentionally deceptive, in the choice of a title of so grave and high import. His work was designed for a discursive and amusing miscellany, rather than an elaborate disquisition ; and if some title, indicative of this, had been adopted, instead of the term of large profession and assumption, “ Philosophy,” the reader might have had no great cause to complain ; for it contains, though in the most dissipated and desultory form it is possible to conceive, a great number of sprightly sentiments, with a multitude of slight notices of facts, places, and remarkable persons ; and the whole is decorated with a liberal sprinkling of classical quotation. The writer is evidently a man of cultivated taste, of very extensive reading, and of active, buoyant fancy. We only regret that he should never have cared to know there are such things as order in thinking, and method in composition.

He introduces himself in an unassuming, ingenuous and, therefore, conciliatory manner.

"The following pages are the result of hours stolen from an application to higher interests, and from the severity of graver subjects.—They were written in the privacy of retirement, among scenes worthy the pen of Virgil, and the pencil of Lorrain :—Scenes, which afford perpetual subjects for meditation to all those who take a melancholy pleasure in contrasting the dignified simplicity of nature, with the vanity, ignorance, and presumption of man.

"‘There is no one,’ says one of the best and soundest moralists of our age, ‘there is no one, however limited his powers, who ought not to be actuated by a desire of leaving something behind him which should operate as an evidence that he once existed.’—During those hours of peaceful enjoyment, in which these pages were composed, such was the ambition by which the writer was animated. Upon revising what he has written, however, and comparing it with those ideas of excellence, which, in no very courteous language, whisper a knowledge of what abler pens than his would have written, on a subject so well selected for eliciting all the best energies of genius, he is awed from any expectation of an honourable distinction ; and nothing supplies the place of those golden dreams which once delighted him, but the satisfaction of having passed, happily and innocently, hours which would otherwise have been listless, useless, and unnumbered."

We do not well comprehend why, unless the author suffered some physical disability for roving, his hours should necessarily have been listless, in such scenes, though he had *not* been stimulated by this ambition, and animated by these golden dreams. Are, then, the charms of nature, so passionately and poetically chanted through several hundred pages, in truth, after all, so feeble, that even their "fond enthusiast" would soon cease to feel their power, were they not so fortunate as to become the accessories of his vanity or ambition ? When we see the pupil and devotee of nature, apparently insensible that he is wandering or that he is fixed to the spot ; when we perceive his eye sometimes arrested and fixed in its gaze, as if by some enchantment, and sometimes in a "fine frenzy rolling ;" when we are fearing and avoiding to disturb him by a movement or a word, as we should a person engaged in an act of religious worship ; when we are envying the rapture with which he contemplates the beauty of the groves, and listens to their music, or beholds the torrent, the mountain, or the vast landscape ;—what ! are we soon to find out that the vital sentiment,

the predominant idea in all this enthusiasm, has been no other than the anticipation of the praise to be got by a fine printed description of these objects, and of the tasteful delirium into which they have rapt him?—And then as to what the quoted and approved “moralist” says;—doubtless every man should endeavour to do so much good, that some part or trace of it will necessarily stay behind him, when he quits the world: but if it is meant that the actuating motive in such exertion ought to be ambition to secure a monument to his fame, we think it must have been a lying oracle that this so excellent a moralist had consulted.

But it will seem trifling to have noticed these matters in the introduction, when the reader finds that the whole work swarms with all the peccadillos with which carelessness, versatile fancy, random wildness of declamation, and a morality without a sufficiently fixed standard, could furnish it.

No critic can attempt the book in the ordinary methods of the profession. It is perfectly without plan in either fact or pretension. It has no divisions, except that all the paragraphs are distinguished by Roman numerals, to the amount of between four and five hundred. In some places there is a small degree of sequence and relation among half a dozen of these neighbour paragraphs: but, taking the whole work together, we think it would be possible, without impairing the book in point of regular connexion, to put the series in twenty very different orders of succession. And yet, from whatever cause, we think we have never had a feeling so tolerant for so unpardonable a contempt of arrangement. For one thing, the subject itself is rich and attractive, whether exhibited in order or confusion: and indeed our author would plead, if called rigorously to account, that he has, in this disorder, imitated nature herself, who throws her multitudinous productions in the most promiscuous manner over the terrestrial scene. He is, besides, we think, in a very considerable degree, a real enthusiast for nature; and therefore he gains a good deal of that favour which is always attracted by what

appear to be genuine avowals of passion for a deserving object:—at the same time there is not a little of what we must regard as very extravagant, and suspect of being downright extravagance prepense. The principal thing, however, that prevents the reader's weariness, and beguiles the critic's anger, is, that this extensive tract of utter confusion is not a mere rhapsody of sentiment: it is crowded with brief references to matters of fact which are well worth knowing. The excursive manner in which the author pursues his general object, carries him and his readers into ever part of the globe; and though this "racing and chasing" would be unnecessary and undesirable, and we might endure to be kept much more still, if we were in the company of a veritable philosopher, it must be confessed that the lively talk of our author does better as the accompaniment of these excursions, than it would without them. We are entertained with the transient views of grand natural objects, of the present or ancient state of places memorable in history, of the peculiar aspects of various picturesque regions, or of the monumental relics that give occasion to recall to memory the great human actors or thinkers of past times. We have, besides, animated characters and eulogiums of the most distinguished poets of nature, and notices of the most celebrated landscape painters.

The width of the author's excursions comprehends almost all that is the most remarkable in the natural scenery of the whole earth. His reading of books of travels must have been prodigious; and with the finest of what we may call the home scenery, he appears to be personally familiar. The grand transient phenomena of the elements do not escape his attention in his range. He sometimes speculates very briefly on their causes, in a way rather to show that he has read the conjectures and theories on the subject, than that he has scientifically studied them. He greatly prefers, and indeed is justified by the design of his work in preferring, moral and sentimental descants to any thing approaching to strictly philosophical disquisition. He has reflections and emo-

tions to express at every place and on every subject ; and considering the unlaboured, uninvestigating strain of thought and feeling which he revels in, we almost wonder there is not a greater degree of sameness.

By the plan of his work, he crowds the dominion of Nature with even more than honestly belongs to her, for in rambling among the riches of the physical region, he is continually finding matters of literature and art thrown in his way ; and in fantastic, sudden, and endless changes, he sports the character of critic or historian, mingled with that of antiquary, virtuoso, or ranting enthusiast. Sometimes he will be a sober geographer, then he is called upon to estimate the respective merits of the orders of architecture ; next it is violets and roses, and birds of paradise, and music, and beauty, and all for love ; immediately at hand, however, are battles, and thunders, and whirlwinds, and inundations, and earthquakes, and volcanic fires ; next an adventure in the regions of Aurora Borealis, and thence a desperate plunge to the bottom of the ocean ; but quickly emerging, this volatile and wayward spirit probably goes to study philosophy and poetry in India.—No transitions of gay, and rapid, and brilliant confusion that any reader can have previously imagined, will be found, when he comes to the book itself, to have been too fantastic an anticipation of its character.

There is frequently a considerable intermingling of apparently devotional sentiment : it will not be wondered at if this sentiment has too little of the definite character of religious faith ; and if there are many heedless expressions, assumptions, and implications, not very compatible with a cautiously strict adherence to the oracles of revelation, though doubtless clear of any intentional discordance with them. The general spirit of the work is rather too much like a worship alternately of nature itself, and of the God of nature, as divested of any other character in which the inhabitants of this world have to contemplate him.

There is much amiable moral sentiment in the work.

The author is a zealous inculcator of peace, and all the principles and duties of justice and charity. He has also the Greek and Roman spirit of liberty.

But we have hardly even yet expressed ourselves with sufficient strength respecting the monstrous extravagancies into which he seems not so much to be driven by the fury of an involuntary *possession*, as actually to solicit to be driven by deliberately invoking on the tripod, the fierce afflatus.

* * * * *

There is much less harm in our author's merely poetical extravagancies, than in the excess of his assertions, (of which we could, if we had space, quote some equally contradictory to fact and to religion,) respecting the power of the influences of nature to console the severest sorrows, and to correct dangerous moral habitudes.

[February, 1815.]

An Essay on the Life of Michel de L'Hôpital, Chancellor of France. By
CHARLES BUTLER, Esq. 8vo.

It might be made a question which is greater, the pleasure, or the disgust, of beholding an individual of exalted faculties and virtues, maintaining, for a course of years, an unremitting contest for justice with surrounding millions of his species ; with consummate policy restraining their bad passions, sometimes by setting these passions to disable one another, sometimes contriving delays to mitigate their violence ; sometimes managing to make what is right so palpably identical with what is immediately advantageous, as to constrain its adoption even on the grossest principles of self-interest ; keeping parties in a state so balanced as to gain time and impunity for some attempts at the formation of another interest and combination better than any of them ; slowly insinuating correction into their practical institutions ; and all the while most assiduously labouring, though with small success, to diminish the ignorance and the prejudices of the whole community.

It cannot, however, be a question long ; since this illustrious mortal cannot be contemplated as a detached object, presenting to view nothing but its own excellence. It stands inseparably conjoined with the degraded mass, and as necessarily forces on our perception the character of that mass as its own. And the complacency or enthusiasm which that one object is fitted to inspire, though reanimated again and again in the mind, will as often be overborne by the shame, or the grief, or the indignation, or all these sentiments together, which will irresistibly invade the beholder of unworthy millions, in whose very debasement is found the measure of the elevation of the one noble exception. We are too closely

related to the race for either benevolence to sanction, or sympathy to leave it possible, that we should be philosophically satisfied to regard the grand bulk of that race as answering a sufficient purpose in serving as a foil to a few individuals of eminent excellence; or that we should coolly throw away the immense mass as a kind of waste and rubbish, necessarily heaped around during the operation of working out a few colossal forms of moral and intellectual perfection, well worth that in their production so much material should go to waste.

But though neither the interest which we ought to feel, nor that which, as sharing the same nature, we are constrained to feel, if it were only through the medium of our pride, will suffer us, in making our estimates of the moral world, to be content to rest the value of a vast aggregate of human creatures on one or a few sublime individuals, and let the remainder go for nothing, yet in attempting to apprehend and verify the worth of that immense crowd, as beheld in some ages and nations, we are forced on a process to divest it of its actual appearance. We are compelled either to an exercise of abstraction and refinement, to reach at some sort of philosophical notion of the essential value of rational and moral creatures independently of their modifications; or to an exercise of fancy, representing the admirable agencies and transformations that *might* pass upon them, and the estimable and noble state of character to which it would not be impossible for them to be raised.

In the reveries on the conceivable modes in which a stupid, perverse, bigoted tribe or nation might be benefited, the imagination will readily give form to a diversity of grand expedients, of a quality corresponding to the more benign or severe temper in which they are conceived. In a mind constitutionally severe, and in the gloomy moments and the harsh and indignant moods of a more philanthropic spirit, one of the images most prompt to present themselves, and most complacently entertained and dwelt upon, will be that of an individual endowed with almost super-human faculties; possessed with an humble and awful fear of God, but toward

human beings lofty, dictatorial, fearless, and inflexible ; enlightened and impelled invariably by a consummate sense of justice ; invincibly resolute to effect that justice at all hazards, yet sagacious in the choice of means ; and, to crown all this, invested with the most unlimited form that can be conceived of temporal power. Such a personage presented to the imagination, in the harsher moods of benevolent musing, will be instantly set to work on some perverse section of the human race ; and with delight will be followed through a career in which, indifferent to life but as a space for the fulfilment of appointed duty, infinitely scornful of that idol of almost all other fervent spirits—glory, and caring incomparably less about either the love or the hatred of human beings than about the object of mending them—he will accomplish a grand plan of correction, in which intimidation, and chastisement, and coercion, shall be very largely employed to give authoritative force to the dictates of truth, and drive and frighten men as much as persuade them, into a state of less absurdity and iniquity.

Cardinal Ximenes has often recurred to our imagination as a character meeting several parts of this description in an unprecedented degree : the fatal fault was, that instead of being the castigator and crusher of persecuting bigots, he was himself one of the greatest of bigots in religion. Had he united the comparatively enlightened principles of Michel de l'Hôpital, relative to this great subject, with the vigorous, imperious austerity of his character, we should have been tempted to wish his external means of power ten times greater even than they were ; in the exercise of which power we might at some moments of indignant feeling have been tempted to be pleased at seeing him acting out such a part, against the perversities and iniquities of a nation, as would have fixed upon him, in a less terrible and more useful sense, the famous denomination of *Flagellum Dei*.

It must, perhaps, be acknowledged, that in a milder state of feeling, the subject of the present biographical Essay would appear the preferable man to be invested with an immense arbitrary power ; preferable, we mean,

in point of mental temperament, setting out of view the vast difference between a popish inquisitor and an enlightened friend of religious toleration.

Mr. Butler, we think, has rendered a real service to the public, by drawing together into a compressed arrangement, from a variety of works, which he enumerates and describes, the most important matters relating to the life and character of this eminent and admirable man. Every reader will wish that he had made a larger selection, when he had collected into one view so many materials.

The memoir is preceded by some notices of the funeral orations, and the *eloges*, which have been so much in fashion in France, and "a succinct view of the revolutions of the jurisprudence of Europe before the time of the Chancellor de l'Hôpital." This "succinct view" compresses a great deal of information in a small space. He remarks that the formation of a perfectly distinct class of men for the practice of the law, may be regarded as an institution of modern Europe; he states the nature and extent of the legal profession in ancient Rome; notices the origination of various semi-barbarous but progressively improving codes of law from the institution of feudalism; and describes the consequences of the discovery, at Amalfi, about the year 1137, of a copy of the *Pandects of Justinian*, the zealous and extensive study of which work, resulted at length in "*a regular succession of civil lawyers*." Cujas, one of the greatest improvers of the science, if it may be so denominated, was persecuted in Italy, and "found under the patronage of l'Hôpital, an honourable reception in France."

This illustrious statesman was the son of a physician, and was born in 1505, at Aignepersé, in Auvergne. After having studied the law in several universities, he held, during a short period, an office at Rome; but "soon returned to France, and married the daughter of John Morin, the lieutenant-criminal, in consequence of which he obtained, in 1537, a charge of counsellor in the parliament of Paris."

There is a rather interesting digression on the parliament of France, as distinguished from that of England.

The origin of each was the same, and in their earlier periods both had a legislative as well as judicial operation. But in their progress they diverged into very different characters, and the difference was much in favour of England.

“ In the course of time, the parliament of England became divided into its two houses, the Lords and Commons, and, together with the king, constituted the legislature of the nation : but its judicial power generally fell into disuse, except in cases which are brought before the House of Lords by appeal. The reverse happened in almost every country on the continent ; in them the parliament gradually lost its legislative authority, and subsided into a High Court of Justice for the last resort, and a court of royal revenue. It generally consisted of a fixed number of ecclesiastical peers, a fixed number of lay peers, and a fixed number of counsellors. All were equally judges, and had an equal right of giving their opinions, and an equal voice in the decree. Such was the constitution of the French parliament when l'Hôpital was received into it. But, at that time, it had somewhat degenerated from its ancient splendour.”—p. 13.

A very curious description follows, from the Abbé Gédoyne, of the personal and judicial habits and manners of the great law officers of that previous better age. Equity, severe industry, strict morals, plainness in the economy of life, and elegant literature, form its prominent features. All the virtues, the dignity, and the accomplishments, however, of that better period, descended in full measure to l'Hôpital.

One of the offices which he filled in succession in his progress up to the chancellorship, was that of superintendent of the finances ; on which our author observes,

“ This is a remarkable era in the history of France, as it was during l'Hôpital's administration of the finances that the French monarch first attempted to check that spirit of resistance to the royal will, which the parliament of Paris had for some time showed, and which at different times afterwards it exerted with so much effect, as frequently to paralyze the government, and ultimately to precipitate it into the revolution.”

The most unqualified encomiums are pronounced, and doubtless with the greatest justice, on his conduct in all his public employments thus far. But there is generally some weakness in the greatest personages that history has vaunted, to help our endeavours to be content at

least, if not to make us actually vain, in thinking of the leading performers of our own times. This man, of capacities so ample, of activity so indefatigable, had not art enough, nor sense enough, in twenty years of important public employment, during six of which he had the management of the finances, to make a fortune for himself! Though the reverse of every thing sumptuous in his habits of life, he had not at the end of that period money enough to be able to afford a tolerable portion with his daughter, his only child. What noble improvements in statesmanship were reserved for later times!

However imperfectly l'Hôpital had deserved it, his next ascent was to the highest honour, the chancellorship, to which he was appointed just at the time that the "religious troubles in France had begun." The doctrines of Calvin had made proselytes in the south of France; the ministers of Francis the First and Henry the Second combated the heresy by persecution; "the usual consequences," says Mr. Butler, "of persecution followed; the favourers of the new opinions rapidly increased: the spirit of fanaticism became general, and the whole kingdom was divided into the odious distinctions of Papist and Huguenot."

All the remainder of this great statesman's official life was employed in the most earnest exertions to restrain the fury of popish bigotry, which rankled and raged in the royal house, in the powerful family and party of the Guises, as an adjunct to their political ambition, in the general body of the ecclesiastics, and in a very large proportion of the nation. On several critical occasions his great talents and authoritative virtues had the effect of suspending or moderating the cruel measures which have rendered that portion of the French history, and of the history of the Romish church, so infamous. But at length he found his opposition unavailing, and resigned his office. He lived to see, three or four years afterwards, the supreme triumph of the cause he had opposed, in the massacre of St. Bartholomew, which embittered all his hours during the few subsequent months of his life. He died at Vignay, on the 13th of March, 1573, having

in his highest as well as all his other public employments, so much forgotten the concern of personal emolument, that, says our author, "the small provision which he should leave behind him for his grand-children, afflicted his last moments;"—which we think, if there is a Providence, was the least founded of all the sorrows of such a man.

Considering to what Church our very learned and intelligent Author adheres, we think that much applause is due to the manner in which he has related the odious history of that period, and the emphatical condemnation he has pronounced on the Inquisition, and some other of the appointments and proceedings which consigned such multitudes of the best citizens of France to the grave. He even pronounces the censure of intolerance on a law which l'Hôpital himself was compelled in some sort to sanction, as the only way of preventing the establishment of the Inquisition in France, namely, the confirmation to the bishops of the cognizance of heretics in their dioceses. "This," says Mr. Butler, "was too great a sacrifice to intolerance; but it gave the bishops no new power, and completely eluded the project of the Inquisition," after the Guises had obtained a resolution of the royal council in its favour.

We cannot much wonder that our Author should let fall some expressions tending to extenuate the atrocity of the persecution of the Huguenots, by insinuating that it was not solely and purely by their religion that they made themselves obnoxious to the hostility of the popish government. It is not at all necessary for a Protestant to maintain that none of their active leaders were, at any time, incited by any feelings or schemes of political ambition. It is too evident that some aspiring men, more intent on objects of personal and secular aggrandizement than on the vindication of religious liberty, did endeavour, and sometimes with a degree of success, to implicate the protestant cause with their schemes. It was, unfortunately, impossible for the Huguenots to have leaders of high rank and great weight in the state, without constant danger of being betrayed into more than

they wished of the character of political partisans. But it is still more glaringly evident that the Huguenots had a grand cause and object *simply as Protestants*; and that to this the great body of them were infinitely more devoted at all times than they ever were, at any moment, to any merely political object. In fact, the great body of them were devoted to this alone, insomuch, that if they did at any time support the personal designs of any distinguished leader, it was from being led to believe that this was the most direct way to *their* object. Religious liberty, or so much of liberty as is comprehended in full toleration, was uniformly that object. It was for this that they were driven by relentless and aggravated oppressions to take up arms. It was because they were placed by a popish government, in the alternative of returning to a Church which they solemnly believed they had convicted of the grossest errors, impositions, and iniquities; and which courted them with anathemas, inquisitors, and denunciations of fire and sword;—the alternative of returning to such a Church, or of being exterminated. They thought it their duty to expose themselves to the not greater perils of the field of battle, in the solemn experiment, whether Providence would not enable them to deliver themselves from this condition, and to vindicate for themselves, and secure for their posterity, the freedom of religious opinions and worship. And brave as they were, quite to the romantic pitch, they gladly threw down their arms the very first moment the concessions of their enemies allowed them to believe that object attained. But the hatred of the popish party, burned without intermission; and it was not long before the inefficacy of the enactments in their favour, undressed outrages, and a universal, urgent sense of insecurity, compelled the Huguenots again to the last resort. Again they were readily disarmed by concessions and promises; too readily, we have always thought, in contemplating the history of those times; and again it was not long before the non-fulfilment of the most formal stipulations, numerous assassinations, for which no one was punished, and unequivocal signs of the most deadly

intentions, would bring them once more into the field, to be yet again too readily disarmed by the treacherous professions and engagements of those whose *power* had failed to disarm them. That, with the great body of them, the *sole object* of all their zeal and exertions, was that religious liberty which they had avowed as their end, and that, this being granted them, they would have been zealously loyal to a popish government, is attested by l'Hôpital and Mr. Butler, who celebrate the unreserved fidelity and gallantry they displayed in its service, in one of the intervals in which the required toleration appeared to be granted.

Through this long period, down to the massacre of St. Bartholomew, whatever uncertain proportion of more liberal and humane adherents to the Church of Rome there might be in France, the Protestants experienced from the predominant portion, from that which effectively constituted the state, a conduct systematically bigoted, treacherous, and sanguinary. And that infernal tragedy itself—did it excite in the Catholic part of the nation any loud and extensive manifestations of abhorrence? Were not the executioners in the provinces as prompt and numerous as in the metropolis? Was there any indignant commotion through the grand mass of the ecclesiastics of France, bursting out into solemn anathemas on all the designers and actors? Was there ever one of the miscreants, from the king, that fired from his windows, and cried out—*Kill them, kill them*,—down to the butcher, who boasted how effectually he had executed this mandate, touched by the Holy Office, which had tortured so many victims for a few words of scepticism or disrespect to the church? And the grand metropolis of that church, which had sent forth so many vindictive fulminations, did Rome issue any of its tremendous denunciations? Was there in any portion of the Catholic world, any grand public manifesto to consign, in the name of the church and its religion, all persons concerned in the transaction to infamy? Was there even any prohibition or repression of public rejoicings on the occasion? Was there, in short, any thing

in the transaction itself so perfectly in opposition to the spirit which the Church of Rome had displayed, in innumerable instances, in the preceding times? On what ground could that church be required to look, from its proud eminence, over the world, with a different visage from that which had been beheld by the Waldenses and Albigenses?

It is not without some degree of compassion, mingling with harsher feelings, that we view the lot of such men as Mr. Butler and Mr. Eustace. It is rather a melancholy destiny, we think, to be fascinated to a church, which rises to view, on the great field of history, like a mountain beset almost all over with gibbets, fires, racks, black orifices of dungeons, savages for inflicting torments and death, and graves of martyrs. And it is melancholy to see such men labouring to soothe and coax the revolting, struggling repugnance of their better feelings, striving to qualify the characteristic facts with which their church glares upon them, and seeking for any occasional or collateral causes to charge such facts upon, rather than the genuine inherent spirit of that church. When driven to condemn, unequivocally and emphatically, some of the enormities which resulted from the intrinsic quality of the church, they contrive, with admirable dexterity, to obey the precept of hating the sin and yet loving the sinner. They would be smitten with horror at the suggestion of execrating and abandoning the church, which not only has perpetrated such things, but has never been induced to avow, in any public solemn form, its repentance of them, and to enjoin, at length, on all its adherents, the duty of giving a full toleration to Protestants. How would any suggestion of this kind be received at the Court of Rome? How would it, at any moment, for half a millennium past, have been there received? How would it be received by the vast majority of ecclesiastics of all Catholic Europe, excepting France? These gentlemen know perfectly well that in those countries where the Catholic Church retains its full prevalence, the most furious hatred is still entertained against what they call the heretics; and that, in a large

portion of Europe, the attempt to form a congregation of Protestant worshippers, would infallibly draw down the instant rancorous vengeance of ecclesiastics, of magistrates, and of the populace. Such is, palpably, the church which these intelligent persons revere as representative of heaven upon earth. We cannot allow them *to make another church of their own*, with ever so much liberality, tolerance, and so forth, among its constituent qualities, and to let themselves fancy they are good Catholics, while they adhere to such an *imaginary* church. The plain question for them is,—Are you of the actual Church of Rome, or not? The real, essential nature of that church is still palpable in its spirit and works;—do you adopt that church or not? If you are really the friends of religious freedom, by what paltering with conscience do you elude the conviction of the duty of becoming Protestants? In how many centuries do you expect that the actual Church of Rome will come to that liberality and charity, which you too profess to admire, and the contraries of which you must, therefore, abhor?

[February, 1816.]

Speeches of the Right Honourable John Philpot Curran, Master of the Rolls in Ireland, on the late very interesting State Trials. Fourth Edition. 8vo.

WHEN we looked into this collection at its first appearance, we were willing to indulge some degree of hope that it might prove to be the precursor, and perhaps in some way or other the cause of a larger assemblage and exhibition of the effusions of this most brilliant of advocates. We wished it might not be too much even to hope that, like several great orators, ancient and modern, who been their own editors, he might be induced to lend some assistance himself towards the recovery and permanence of the master-performances of his forensic life. But no such consequence or sequel has gratified the public taste. Even as to the specimens secured in this solitary volume, the Editor has to acknowledge with very just regret that in the first and each succeeding edition they have appeared without the advantage of the slightest intervention of their Author, an advantage which he apprehended there was so much cause to despair of obtaining for them, that he did not venture to solicit. They are given therefore merely on the very unsatisfactory authority of the reporters in the contemporary journals or pamphlets, reporters not, probably, the most dexterous of their profession, and often, when the orator "drove furiously," left toiling far behind, like Time panting in pursuit of Shakspeare.

The Editor, having been, it seems, long in the habit of hearing Mr. Curran's speeches, would be much more sensible of the defects of these reports than the generality of their readers; but he has nevertheless felt himself bound to forbear any attempt at rectifying even what he deemed the most palpable defects, judging that such

corrections ought to come solely from Mr. Curran himself, and wishing that these faults and imperfections might provoke him to come forward to do justice to the splendid character of his eloquence by an authenticated publication. We have now but little hope of such a consequence, but earnestly wish it could be obtained. Mr. Curran is one of that small class of persons, whose failing to leave in the literature of their country performances fully illustrative, and perpetually monumental, of their talents, may without affectation be adjudged a wrong done to the community. Not to notice that all very remarkable phenomena, as well in the intellectual as in the physical world, are due to history,—it might surely be asserted, that a nation has a just claim to be put in lasting possession of whatever will furnish the most true and vivid representation of a mind which has had a material influence on its fortunes, a mind which has been profusely honoured with its applause, its gratitude, its caresses, and its admiration, a mind which that nation has taken, with a few other powerful minds, as a kind of ground and justification of a high estimate of the mental capabilities of its people. Besides, there are at all times so many influences of mediocrity acting upon a people, from the little mental elevation and capacity of the vast majority of the persons holding, by office or rank, the ascendancy over them, that it is very important to perpetuate, in the best possible form, the agency of those stronger spirits that have the most powerfully stimulated the national faculties. May we not add, that in the possible and lamentable case that one of these strong spirits has combined with its more beneficial energy certain moral habits, the example of which must have been injurious to contemporaries, it is the more desirable to perpetuate the influences by which he will solely or mainly do good?—It is a grievous thing to be under the necessity of making this kind of allusion, in order to avoid the appearance of being beguiled by noble intellectual powers, most worthily in many respects exerted, into an indifferent estimate of any of the cardinal points of morality.—Why should not our unrivalled advocate

have been as bright on *every* side as on that of his talent and courageous and consistent patriotism ?

On a re-inspection of parts of this small collection, we still more and more regret, that the effusions, we might say the explosions, of such a mind should have been almost all destined to flame and vanish without any one's being near that could reflect them complete in a lasting memorial ; that there was no person to perform with adequate skill, the service analogous to that of the painter Fabris, who so admirably delineated Vesuvius while on fire ; and that, if we may prolong the figure, the exhibition in the present volume has so considerable a portion of what reminds us of *scoriæ* and cinders. The intellectual fire comes out here and there with surprising force and beauty. It is quite enchanting to see what a power of mind can be thrown out in a single sentence. Sometimes there is a train of such sentences, keen in intelligence, glowing with passion, generally indignant passion, and brilliant in fancy. All these qualities meet sometimes in one sentence. And as, most commonly, such a sentence was levelled at some scoundrel or other, the reader exults to think how it must have smitten on his head. In some parts there is a considerable length of plain but vigorous and acute discussion, in application of law, or appreciation of evidence, the orator being too strong for argument to be often disposed to escape through either the dazzling or the shades of his imagination ; while, nevertheless, if he *had* been in peril in the contest, this resource was as certainly at hand, and almost as certain to be effectual, as the interposition of the gods in the Iliad to carry off their favourites involved in a cloud.

The readers of the volume will be struck, as Mr. Curran's auditors have always been, with the prodigious versatility of his oratorical talents, a versatility which we should hesitate to attribute in an equal degree to any other of the renowned public speakers : Burke, who had almost all talents, did not, we think, possess a faculty of humour so flexible and comic. It may be very doubt-

ful praise to say, that Curran could descend to absolute drollery and buffoonery, and on that ground as on others, could "hit away his competitors." It is recollected that once in the performance of his official duty in court, he suddenly fell into the character of a drunkard, with the appropriate hiccupings, and staggerings, and broken sentences, all acted in a manner so ludicrously representative of some person whom he wished to expose to contempt, as to gain in aid of his cause all the coarse reinforcement of the risible and gamesome feelings of those on whose decision it depended. But even from such a low revel of his energies his mind would easily have risen, at the slightest prompting of occasion, within the same hour, into the region of intellectual meteors or stars, would have bounded among splendours and sublimities, and darted away with a track of light towards the remotest regions of thought. His whole mental action has an appearance of facility and spontaneousness of which even the readers of this volume can form but a very imperfect idea. If this sometimes betrays him into a freakish wantonness of fancy and humour, it does not prevent, when the interest is important or complicated, a most pertinacious prosecution of the object, with all the sublimity of distinction and closeness of argument. If he seems sometimes in a whirl of fancy to be carried from his subject, he never loses sight of it. It is admirable and delightful to observe that never-winking perspicacity on which no sports of his own mercurial spirit, no circumstances of interruption, confusion, opposition, or provocation, no scattered extent and diversity of topics, can ever pass a delusion. The whole subject stands constantly revealed in his view, and whatever any part or particle of it contains that is available for his purpose, he is certain to elicit. His clients must sometimes have been surprised to observe the relevancy of topics and the force of arguments, in his hands, which had never even occurred to their own busy and inquisitive thoughts. The sensible and patriotic Editor of the volume informs us, that Mr. Curran, while at the bar,

surpassed all his fraternity in the sagacity of cross-examination.

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No part of the process of the trials is given but his speeches, with those occasional sentences of interruption which came from the court ; but the manner in which he sometimes comments on wicked evidence, may give some idea of the torture he must have inflicted on the suborned and perjured wretches, while he had them under the *question*, and of the little less enviable sensations of more important personages, when they had an interest in the success of the villany. The galling missiles of this terrible sagittary would not seldom strike those more important persons themselves, sometimes by a direct but sudden aim, and sometimes by a matchless dexterity of slanting flight. Of this latter there is an admirable example in the first of the speeches, a very long one, before the Lord Lieutenant and Council, on a question of the right of election of the Lord Mayor of Dublin, a very important subject then and there, though now, and to English readers especially, of the most diminutive interest : but the speech, even thus imperfectly reported, contains some fine specimens of acute argument, unexpected resource, daring and presence of mind, and happy and powerful satire ; and then, there is the indirect and most vengeful piece of inflictive justice to which we alluded. The chief object of it was the Lord Chancellor Clare. In making some historical references, strictly connected with his subject, Curran took occasion to introduce the character of an Irish Chancellor in the time of queen Anne, Sir Constantine Phipps, who had actually committed some such violations of the municipal rights of the city of Dublin as the splendid court to which the Advocate was addressing himself, had given ground for suspicion of being disposed to repeat. My Lord Chancellor Clare seemed afraid there might, in such hands, be mischief in the subject, and interrupted Mr. Curran with an observation that it was altogether foreign to the present cause. In a few calm sentences the advocate

showed how it *had* a very evident relation to it; and then, probably from the mere impulse of the moment, for the passage comes in with all the ease of casual thought, went off in the following strain, and very probably, though it is not mentioned, fixing the well known intrepid keenness of his dark eyes on the proper object.

"In this very chamber did the Chancellor and Judges sit, with all the gravity and affected attention to arguments in favour of that liberty and those rights which they had conspired to destroy. But to what end, my lords, offer argument to such men? A little and a peevish mind may be exasperated, but how shall it be corrected by refutation. How fruitless would it have been to represent to that wretched Chancellor, that he was destroying those rights which he was sworn to maintain, that he was involving a government in disgrace, and a kingdom in panic and consternation; that he was violating every sacred duty, and every solemn engagement, that bound him to himself, his country, his sovereign, and his God. Alas! my Lords, by what argument could any man hope to reclaim or dissuade a mean, illiberal, and unprincipled minion of authority, induced by his profligacy to undertake, and bound by his avarice and vanity to persevere? He would probably have replied to the most unanswerable arguments, by some curt, contumelious, and unmeaning apophthegm delivered with the fretful smile of irritated self-sufficiency and disconcerted arrogance; or even, if he could be dragged by his fears to a consideration of the question, by what miracle could the pigmy capacity of a stunted pedant be enlarged to a reception of the subject? The endeavour to approach it would have only removed him to a greater distance than he was before: as a little hand that strives to grasp a mighty globe is thrown back by the re-action of its own effort to comprehend. It may be given to a Hale or a Hardwicke to discover and retract a mistake; the errors of such men are only specks that arise for a moment upon the surface of a splendid luminary; consumed by its heat, or irradiated by its light, they soon purge and disappear; but the perverseness of a mean and narrow intellect is like the excrescences that grow upon a body naturally cold and dark: no fire to waste them and no ray to enlighten, they assimilate and coalesce with those qualities so congenial to their nature, and acquire an incorrigible permanence in the union with kindred frost and opacity. Nor indeed, my Lords, except where the interest of millions can be affected by the vice or the folly of an individual, need it be much regretted, that, to things not worthy of being made better, it hath not pleased Providence to afford the privilege of improvement?"

"How fares my good lord chancellor the while?" He could not keep himself quiet on the velvet cushion of state; he again admonished the offerer of the sulphureous incense, that he had altogether departed from the proper ground of his subject. Curran resuming, re-asserted

argumentatively the propriety of taking a wider scope of observation than that dictated to him by the court; and he went on,

“ I am aware, my lords, that truth is to be sought only by slow and painful progress: I know also that error is in its nature flippant and compendious; it hops with airy and fastidious levity over proofs and arguments, and perches upon assertion, which it calls conclusion.”

This sentence appeared to his lordship so ominous of another storm, that he moved to have the chamber cleared, and during the exclusion of strangers “ moved the council that Mr. Curran should be restrained by their lordships’ authority from proceeding further in the line of argument he was then pursuing; but his lordship was overruled,” and the advocate went on as he pleased; but judging, doubtless, that he had now literally fulfilled his duty to the chancellor, did not recall him by a new attack from the luxury of rumination on what he had already received.

It is evident from the general clearness and connexion of the thoughts, and the complete construction of the sentences, that this speech was much more fortunate in a reporter than many of the others. It was effectual as to the point in litigation.

The powerful speech for Mr. Archibald Hamilton Rowan, attained its deserved celebrity in England, and will maintain it by means of several splendid passages which have taken their place among our ordinary collections of extracted specimens of fine composition.

Between the speeches we have referred to, are interposed, subsequently to the first edition, several brief reports of speeches in the Irish parliament, where the orator was not less at his ease, nor less courageous against oppression and corruption, than in the courts of law. But the editor acknowledges these are feeble abstracts, and inserted only in compliance with what he understood to be the public wish. They are indeed, with the exception of some spirited passages, but faint echoes of orations which no doubt abounded with sentences like

those at the commencement of a speech on Attachments, in 1784.

" Mr. Curran said he hoped he might say a few words on this great subject, without disturbing the sleep of any right honourable member (the attorney-general having fallen asleep on his seat), and yet, perhaps, added he, I ought rather to envy than blame the tranquillity of the right honourable gentleman. I do not feel myself so happily tempered as to be lulled to repose by the storms that shake the land. If they invite any to rest, that rest ought not to be lavished on the guilty spirit."

The defence of Mr. Oliver Bond is very inefficiently and meagrely given; it might even as well, perhaps, have been omitted, if no better report could be obtained. In those for the family of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Mr. Patrick Finney, and Mr. Peter Finnerty, we recognize the orator's characteristic power; eminently so in the last, which is a defence against a prosecution for a political libel. It abounds with eloquent representations of the importance of the liberty of the press, illustrative at the same time of the extent to which that liberty must go, if the phrase is to be used in any sense that shall not be an idle or a bitter mockery of the people.

The prosecution was for the publication, in a newspaper, of a bold, indignant letter to the lord lieutenant (Lord Camden) on the subject of the execution of a Mr. William Orr, for administering the oath of an United Irishman to one Wheatley, who turned informer and evidence against him. A verdict of death had been given against Orr, by a jury of whom three men soon afterwards, and before it was too late, most solemnly made oath, with all the earnestness of remorse, that they had been at once intimidated and made drunk to force their concurrence in the fatal verdict, while in their consciences they were satisfied of the innocence of the prisoner. A recommendation to mercy was transmitted by the judges to the lord lieutenant; the informer was proved to be a most infamous wretch; three successive respites were granted by his Excellency, who nevertheless terminated the process and the long suspense by consigning the prisoner to death. In observing on the

strong language of Mr. Finnerty in animadverting on this decision, the advocate appeals to the jury whether *any* terms could be strong enough for the occasion ; and under the privilege of his office he takes upon himself to make, with the aggravated force and severe sting of his own eloquence, the very assault for which the prisoner was prosecuted. In doing this he took his stand on the implication conveyed in the noble prosecutor's refusal to permit the prisoner to produce his offered evidence of the truth of all the facts asserted in the libel. We presume it is the very same person, now in an English prison, that was in an English court in the very same way refused, when pleading in mitigation of punishment, the benefit of evidence which he offered to prove the truth of charges which he was under sentence for having published against another noble personage, relative to transactions in Ireland in those melancholy times. Of this most eloquent speech it appears Mr. Curran did not, at the time of coming into the court, expect to utter one sentence. It is therefore a passing wonderful display of mental power. And its energy and splendour come with an indefinitely augmented force on the reader's mind, from a certain moral element which pervades the performance. It is of a far different quality from the eloquence of a mere advocate. The advocate is lost in the patriot, the lofty censor, the philanthropist. Indeed, partly owing to the nature of the subjects in many of these trials, as involving great and national interests, and involving them in a melancholy manner, and partly owing to the habits of the orator, as a politician, a large thinker, and the associate of large thinkers, it is a very prominent general distinction of Mr. Curran's eloquence, as displayed in this volume, that it is something quite different from that of a mere clever barrister. It has the mingled complexion of the legislator and the poet, often indeed reddened and darkened into a vindictive and ireful expression at the view of great and favoured criminals.

We cannot make extracts of sufficient length to display to full advantage the manner in which he represents the condition of Orr, and the feelings of his family, and the

appeals to the conscience and the feelings of the jury whether they can, in the sight of God and their country, dare to justify by their verdict the chief inflictors of those feelings; nor would we detach from the connexion any part of the truly dreadful picture of the state of the nation as abandoned to be devoured by demoniacs in the shape of privileged and rewarded spies and informers; a picture, of the truth of every part of which he commandingly appeals to them that every man of them has the most absolute conviction and certain knowledge, while nevertheless they are assembled, as he plainly tells them they themselves know, by selection and management, for the purpose of giving a verdict which shall virtually declare all these representations to be false.

But the speech which beyond any other that our readers ever heard or read will put their indignant emotions beyond their power to restrain, is that for Mr. Hevey against Major Sirr. We would make an abstract of the facts of this case, whatever space it might occupy, but from the consideration that this volume has already been extensively read, and will be yet much more so. For these two last mentioned speeches not to have been recalled to public memory and circulation, and secured for perpetuity, would have been a great loss to justice, history, and eloquence. In perusing the latter of them, every reader will ask with impatience whether several horrid miscreants exhibited there continued to enjoy impunity, nay favour and distinction, and whether no infesting thorns have been lodged beyond extraction in the consciences of those who could employ such agents and sanction such transactions.

The speech against the Marquis of Headfort must be well reported; it is prodigiously vigorous and brilliant, with a great deal, at the same time, of art and dexterity in giving effect to the topics.

The greatest part of the very long speech in the case of Judge Johnson is a laborious and dry law argument, but ever and anon the orator and the wit will break out; and there are some very fine passages.

The last article in the volume is a short speech pro-

nounced by Mr. Curran in the capacity of Master of the Rolls, on a trial before him on a will which had been thought invalid for the popish tendency of its bequests. This speech has an uncommon degree of compression and elegance as well as force of expression.

The word elegance reminds us that we should somewhere have remarked that the orator often violates good taste in his allusions and figures, especially in the way of degrading nobler objects by taking them in analogy with mean ones for the sake of some one point of resemblance, when their greater dissimilarity as elevated and mean, should have kept them asunder.

[February, 1817.]

Contemplations of the State of Man, in this Life, and that which is to come. By JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D., and late Lord Bishop of Down and Connor. A New Edition, dedicated, by Permission, to the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Norwich. By the Rev. JOHN NELSON GOULTY. 12mo.

THIS neat volume has the benefit of no less than *four* distinct pieces of composition, in the way of Introduction: the Editor's dedication—his preface—a quaint address to the "Courteous Reader," by B. Hale, D.D., which was prefixed to early editions, we do not know whether to the original one—and a short Advertisement by the original editor or publisher, authenticating the posthumous publication.

It would seem to us that this last, accompanied with one sentence to certify that the present edition is simply and accurately a reprint, was the only one of them at all necessary. As to the Dedication, it is surely somewhat strange to hear of a "Patron" for a work of Jeremy Taylor! And though the liberal spirit of the excellent person addressed, may not be displeased to have the public informed of his "personal friendship" for a "dissenting minister," what is it likely he will say of the "parallel" hinted, in however cautious and general terms, between himself and the author of these contemplations?

* * * * *

Jeremy Taylor is one of the chief of a tribe of powerful spirits, who are returning among us after a sojourn in comparatively oblivious estrangement from our literary sphere, to resume the place in general attention which has been usurped by a inferior order of thinkers. It would seem as if the sound of thunder had brought them back—that they are partly drawn by sympathy with that

state of commotion and energy into which the general mind has been shaken and fired by the tumult of an unparalleled crisis of the moral world ; of which one of the effects has been to throw an imputation of comparative tameness, limited power, and artificial execution, on the standard literature of the last century, and to create a taste for indulging in the stronger excitements of a bolder, and perhaps wilder manner of writing.—We are willing to anticipate great advantages from a revolution in taste, which will leave fewer readers by many, contented in the school of elegant common-place, and mere elaborate, system-bound mediocrity. Many books well written, in a certain moderate sense of that description, will be very insipid to a reader coming directly from the enchanted wildernesses of Jeremy Taylor, to the flat, though possibly well cultivated ground of a merely sensible composition,—much as there may have been in those wildernesses of what is unsightly and of what is of little use ;—for it would betray a perfect fanaticism of admiration, not to be struck with some futilities, and many gross offences to good taste, amid the intellectual scenery, depicted in the pages of this wonderful writer.

With respect to these Contemplations, we question whether they can be deemed to furnish a fair and sufficient exhibition of the author's powers. Most of his characteristic faults are prominently apparent ; but we think the brilliance and sublimity are not quite in the same proportion as in some of his Sermons ; that indeed there are not many passages in his loftiest manner. We are also compelled to think that the greatest number of even thoughtful readers, must experience a want of sympathy with this mode of sentiment, in representing the vanity and misery of this life, and the mournful, revolting, and dreadful circumstances of its conclusion. Much of the representation is of a kind that does not come home to the actual feelings of men. The emphasis of lamentation is not felt to be laid right. The emotion that should be excited, is repressed by a very palpable appearance of downright rhetoric, selecting topics for show, and these often of a very foreign and inapplicable

kind ; darkening the whole life with a systematic exaggeration, which takes no account of exceptions and qualifying circumstances ; and expatiating on the hideousness of death, viewed as an absolute evil, and with a studied exclusion of those glimpses of celestial light, which transform the aspect of this dreadful spectre. For the purpose of a general estimate of the state of man on earth, that is not a correct view of death, which represents it solely and absolutely as an evil, taking no account of the possible alleviations.—It is indeed one of the prevailing faults of the declamatory parts of Taylor's writings, that he takes the *extreme* advantage of his topic. He accumulates all real and all imaginable aggravations, sometimes to the extent of a fantastic extravagance, of the good or evil he is representing, and will suffer no intrusion of those ideas which are absolutely requisite to limit and modify the exhibition to a reasonable conformity to reality or probability. So that the reader, carried along in concurrence with the sentiments to a certain length, absolutely stops at last to see how much further the orator will go. And while he admires the inexhaustible ingenuity, he nevertheless feels the genuine force of the subject acting upon him with diminishing rather than augmenting effect, in proportion as the representation appears to be growing into oratorical excess.

No reader of taste can fail to be struck, in perusing this volume, with a fault which prevails in his other writings,—a careless and even violent mingling of what is coarsely material, with what is highly intellectual and abstracted, and of what is very homely and even low, with what is splendid and sublime. We most readily admit, indeed, and should even zealously contend, that nothing can be more opposite to a just notion of eloquence, than a rule to exclude familiar and very humble objects and topics from all intervention in the illustration of great subjects. Under the direction of taste, a genius even less prolific and plastic than that of Taylor, can conjure very mean matters, with a marvellous appearance of appositeness, into very unexpected relations, and dignified services : and this he does in innumerable in-

stances. But, nevertheless, he does often fling, and blend, and heap together, the mean and the magnificent, the gross and the subtile, the most vulgar objects of the senses and the most recondite forms of thought, in so very crude a combination, as to exhibit the most uncouth and sometimes almost monstrous conformations of ideas. Perhaps the works of no other eloquent and devout author can match such a sentence as the following, (p. 220) suggested by the use in scripture, of the term "supper," as applied to the happiness of religion, and of heaven.

"The principal *dish* which is served in at this great supper, is *the clear vision of God*, and all his divine perfections." In representing the manner in which a departing saint is welcomed in heaven, *all* the blessed often repeating in divine music these words, Well done, good and faithful servant, &c. he adds, in the most grave and positive manner, "Which words they shall repeat in quires." He says God shall be to the blessed in heaven, "music to the ear, sweetness to the taste, balsam to the smell, flowers to the touch." In another place, in a similar connexion, he has it, "The comfortable smell of amber."—Speaking of the rapid diminution of our time, he says, "The motion of the heavens is but the swift turn of a spindle which rolls up the thread of our lives; and a most fleet horse on which death runs post after us."—Speaking of the importance of being ready for death, as enforced by the consideration of the uncertainty of life, he says: "It's good ever to have our accounts made with God: since we know not but he may call us in such haste as we shall have no time to perfect them, it's good *to play a sure game*, and be ever in the grace of God." And a little further on, enforcing the awfulness of the expenditure of time, in the view of what may be gained by it, or lost, he thus sustains the dignity of the topic: "Endeavour then whilst it lasts, *to get a good bargain*; for this life once past, there is no more occasion for traffic."—In the same chapter he says, "The artillery of death is already shot, and there is no quarter of an hour wherein it flies not more than ten millions of

leagues to overtake thee." There are parts of this chapter, nevertheless, ("Of Death, and the certainty of it,") which are signally powerful and striking. In some of them the thought is brought forward in the form of illustrative comparison, presenting itself in an abrupt inartificial manner, and with a rough, homely familiarity of expression. The following may be taken as one of a multitude of specimens, to be found in this volume, of the bold, rough featured kind of composition, which so frequently in the Bishop's writings comes out with a sudden assault upon the reader, instead of inviting his attention with selected and well managed phrases.

"To this uncertainty of death is to be added that of being only one, and only once to be tried; so as the error of dying ill, cannot be amended by dying well another time. God gave unto man his senses and other parts of his body double; he gave him two eyes, that if one failed he might serve himself of the other; he gave him two hands, that if one were lost yet he might not wholly be disabled; but of deaths he gave but one; and if that one miscarry, all is ruined. A terrible case, that the thing which most imports us, which is to die, hath neither trial, experience, or remedy; it is but only once to be acted, and that in an instant, and upon that instant all eternity depends, in which if we fail, the error is never to be amended.

"If an ignorant peasant, who had never drawn a bow, should be commanded to shoot at a mark far distant, upon condition that if he hit it, he should be highly rewarded with many rich gifts; but if he missed it, and that at the first shoot, he should be burnt alive; in what straits would this poor man find himself! How perplexed that he should be forced upon a thing of that difficulty wherein he had no skill, and that the failing should cost him so dear as his life; but especially that it was only once to be essayed, without possibility of repairing the first fault by a second trial! This is our case; I know not how we are so pleasant; we have never died, we have no experience or skill in a thing of so great difficulty; we are only once to die, and in that all is at stake; either eternity of torments in hell, or of happiness in heaven: How live we then so careless of dying well; since for it we were born, and are but once to try it."

Another paragraph may be quoted, to exemplify the tumultuous torrent-impetus with which the course of ideas often rushes along, daringly careless of congruity and probability.

"As in this life the rigour of God's justice is as it were repressed and suspended, so in that point of death, when the sinner shall receive judgment, it shall be let loose and overwhelm him. A great and rapid river

which should for thirty or forty years together have its current violently stopped, what a mass of waters would it collect in so long a space. And if it should then be let loose, with what fury would it overrun and beat down all before it. And what resistance could withstand it? Since then the Divine Justice, which the prophet Daniel compares, not to an ordinary river but to a river of fire, for the greatness and fury of the rigour, shall be repressed for thirty or forty years during the life of man, what an infinity of wrath will it amass together, and with what fury will it burst out upon the miserable sinner in the face of the offended Judge! And therefore the prophet Daniel saith, that a river of fire issued from his countenance, and that his throne was of flames, and the wheels of it burning fire; because all shall then be fire, rigour, and justice. He sets forth unto us his tribunal throne with wheels, to signify thereby the force and violence of his omnipotency, in executing the severity of his justice; all which shall appear in that moment when sinners shall be brought into judgment, when the Lord shall speak to them in his wrath, and confound them in his fury."

The vigour of conception, the austerity, the kind of assailant impetuosity, of which such passages will give some slight idea, are exemplified to a degree almost oppressive, in the part of the book which displays, at great extent, the state of lost spirits: it largely exemplifies also, the violent confusion of the different elements of thought, in a chaotic turbulence. Physical plagues and mental agonies are closely mingled together, as at once in fierce conflict and co-operation over their victims, whose misery is confounded while it is augmented between the coarsest disgusts of sense and the more refined anguish of reflection; between the thought of the eternal loss of the divine favour, and the intolerable annoyance of the stench which it is repeatedly, and formally, and with all possible emphasis, asserted that the bodies of the damned, as well as certain vehicles analogous to bodies, attached to the devils, will perpetually emit while they are eternally burning. In the revolting combination the torments of a physical kind are made much the more conspicuous, and are particularized and amplified with all the grim and prolific ingenuity of Dante. The pious Contemplator deemed himself authorized by those few terrific material images which have been employed in the Bible for a figurative intimation of the severity of the future punishments of the wicked, to exhibit in the most positive manner, as

matters of literal reality, every horrid form of material torment, and every loathsome form of offensive sensation, which he could stimulate his imagination to conceive. Much of this portion of the work, therefore, instead of being awfully and dissuasively impressive, is purely and utterly hideous. The mind recoils in disbelief, regarding it as nothing else than a frightful and disgusting fiction of what there may be a temptation to call a fierce poetical imagination. And if we had not good reason, from other evidence, to regard the pious author as, in a considerable degree, a man of gentle spirit, we should receive a very ungracious impression of the temper of his mind, from that appearance, almost, of ease to himself, with which he dwells and dilates on the infernal horrors ; that protracted creative activity, that something like poetical interest, with which he invents and ramifies, and accumulates, and aggravates modes of torment. And this impression forces itself on the reader the more, from the circumstance that the author, instead of being, while declaring these horrors, rapt away as in an awful and prophetic trance, which would oblivate for the time, his sense of immediate relation to this world and to the human beings in it, and suspend in a degree the claims of human sympathy, is giving every moment the most palpable signs that he is consciously and closely in the company of his fellow mortals, his dreadful discourse being full of references to familiar circumstances in our life, and nature, and society. He seems to be pointedly looking in the faces, and observing the breathing and action of life, and almost feeling the warmth and pulsation in the hands, of human creatures, while he enlarges to the utmost particularity, and with the most frightful and often the coarsest vividness of description, on the corporal tortures of condemned sinners. The intense fire of his imagination, flames directly from the human fuel around him ; so very directly from the physical substance of the human nature, and from its grossest constituents and accidents, that the burning has no sublimity in its horror. The light it gives is fit to be reflected from the countenance of a worshipper of Moloch.

On such subjects, and on all others, the author displays a mighty power of aggravating the emphasis, by means of some single striking image or supposition : not seldom, however, the thought so employed shall have a certain character of enormity, either essentially in the conception, or as being pushed to extravagance. The great river obstructed and dammed up for thirty or forty years, is an example. We will transcribe two or three more.

"Such are the torments and miseries of hell, that if all the trees in the world were put in one heap, and set on fire, I would rather burn there till the day of judgment, than suffer only for the space of one hour that fire of hell."

"We ought not to think much at the sufferings of a thousand years' torments, or to remain in hell itself for some long time, so we might behold Christ in his glory, and enjoy the company of saints, and be partakers of so great a happiness, but for one day."—"If those joys of heaven were short, and these of earth eternal, yet we ought to forsake these for those."

"So powerful is that love and joy which springs from the clear vision of God, that it's sufficient to convert hell into glory ; insomuch, as if to the most tormented soul in hell, were added all the torments of the rest of the damned, both men and devils, and that God should vouchsafe him but one glimpse of his knowledge, that only clear vision, though in the lowest degree, were sufficient to free him from all those evils both of sin and pain."

"So foul and horrid is a mortal sin in its own nature, that though it passed only in thought, and none knew it but God and he who committed it, and which endured no longer than an instant, yet it deserves the torments of hell for all eternity."

For the purpose of aggravation he seeks to put an idea in the most extreme and violent form of language, which shall startle us with a first impression of portentous absurdity. But indeed, no second thoughts can excuse such a mode of expression, for instance, as when he represents sinners in their condemnation at the divine tribunal, as found guilty, not only of self-destruction, but — of Deicide ! His words are,

"The murderer who stands charged with the life of a man, although it be of some wicked person, yet fears to be apprehended and brought to judgment ; how is it then that he who is charged with the life of God trembles not ? Consider how dreadful it shall be unto a sinner, when he shall receive a charge not only of his own being, and his own life, but also of the being and life of God."

The plain meaning of these expressions, even taken thus detached from the context, will be readily apprehended ; but assuredly a great deal of corrective discipline was wanted by an eloquence which could avail itself, for aggravation, of such a license of language.

Taylor is the most arbitrary tyrant over ideas and words that ever had the business of subduing, and ruling, and employing them. When he takes a fancy to make any of them serve a purpose, he cares not how repugnant or unadapted they may be. They are coerced with hasty violence into the appointed places ; and there they are kept, how glaringly evident soever it may in any case be, that there they are necessarily counteracting the purpose for which they were forced thither. He would sometimes appear as if contented to lose the proposed effect, for the wanton indulgence and display of mere power. It is peculiarly so in his excessive exaggerations. When, for instance, in representing the brevity of life, and adverting to the antediluvian age, as no exception to that representation, he says, " Those who lived more than eight hundred years, esteemed their life but as a shadow, and in the instant when they died judged they were scarce born : a life of eight hundred years was no more than the flirting up and down of a little sparrow, or the flight of an arrow ;"—and this is not in any direct comparison to eternity : it is impossible he should not have been sensible he was bringing ideas together but to contradict one another.

In contemplating great monarchies, in existence or in history, we are, from what cause soever, the less offended at the view of some disorders and abuses, some excesses and caprices, in the exercise of power, in proportion to the extent of the dominion. If the intellectual emperor and tyrant of whom we are talking, is to have the benefit of this our instinctive idolatry of power, he will be but little injured in our esteem by all his extravagancies, his violences, his sweeping, indiscriminating dictates, his uncouth or monstrous combinations, his wild orgies and frequent permission of the *Saturnalia* of ideas ; for the extent of his range is quite marvellous, especially for all

kinds of illustrative facts, analogies, similies, and all manner of spectacles, fantastic, splendid, or fearful ; and, if we were to speak with special reference to this book, we might add, repulsive.

It appears to us that this great orator fails very much in the pathetic ; not for want of passion, perhaps, but for want of simplicity. We are never long borne away by a current of feeling too deep and high for us to be touched, retarded, diverted, or intercepted and caught by things in the way. The pathetic effect of many a glowing passage, is spoiled by some grotesque phantasm, or ingenious or erudite allusion, or complication of quaintnesses and rudenesses of phraseology. There is frequently also what we do not well know how to describe otherwise than as a hardness and harshness of sentiment, a something austere and roughly judicial, in parts that might otherwise produce great emotion. While the orator utters the expressions that belong to passion, he scarcely ever seems dissolved in passion, and the reader is not absorbed in sympathy.

These last remarks are made as particularly applicable to the present work. Its predominantly gloomy character is not that of a pensive melancholy, affecting, inspiring, and tending immediately to sublimity and devotion ; but a rugged, frowning austerity, which can recount miseries and menace horrors in a firm harsh tone, only inflected sometimes, rather than relaxed, by the rapid force of mind which throws a certain kind of vivacity into the train of the most gloomy ideas, and most rigorous denunciations. The terrors of death we have before remarked that the author represents in a manner much too indiscriminating ; and he will sometimes, as if in a kind of tragical wantonness of aggravation, make, without the slightest hesitation, such alarming implications or assertions, as it is really difficult to believe expressive of his deliberate opinion,—at least if they mean all they seem to mean. Such a sentence, for instance, as the following,—does it not assert that no man can know, before his death, whether his future state shall be happy or miserable ? and if it does, are we to

believe that to have been the author's decided judgment? Or has the clause we put in *Italics* no definite meaning, being only flung out, in a kind of gloomy sport of fancy, to darken the meditation?

"Death, because it is the end of life, is by the philosopher said to be the terrible of all things terrible: what would he have said, if he had known it to be the beginning of eternity and the gate by which we enter into that vast abyss, *no man knowing upon what side he shall fall into that profound and bottomless depth!*"

A circumstance contributing greatly to enhance the gloomy character of the book, is the very sparing reference made to the effect of the merits and sacrifice of Christ, and the assistance and operations of the Divine Spirit; together with the expressions recurring here and there, which *seem* to refer a creature most guilty and unworthy at the best, to a desperate resource, as to the interests of eternity. We presume the bishop did not mean to teach, systematically, that a man's confidence, in the approach to death and judgment, must be chiefly founded on his own virtues; but something apparently so much resembling this principle, is suggested by expressions like the following, as to deepen the gloom of his formidable representation of death. Describing the arraignment at the supreme tribunal, he says,

"Thou art to expect no patron, no protector, but thy virtuous actions: only they shall accompany thee; when all shall leave thee they only shall not forsake thee; the rich man shall not then have multitudes of servants to set forth his greatness, nor well-fee'd lawyers to defend his process; only his good works shall bestead him, and they only shall defend him."

But there is so much that is oratorically, confusedly, and in a sense carelessly, thrown out in the rapid career of our author's composition, that it would be quite unjust to hold him accountable for the full import and consequences of every transient expression or proposition he may scatter in his course. What would a strict commentator do, for instance, with a sentence in which, after showing what an aggravation it will be to the remorse and despair of lost sinners, to think how much God had done towards effecting their welfare and salvation, the

contemplator says, in so many words, "They shall tremble to see what God did for the good ; and that he did so much as *he could do no more ?*" In short, we must remark, at the hazard of being charged with a fifth or a tenth repetition of our own sentences, that the work displays a most wonderful latitude and wildness of unguarded assertion.

The portion which displays the state of the blessed in heaven, has many forcible and brilliant passages. Especially a part of the Fourth Chapter of the Second Book, ("On the Greatness of Eternal Pleasures,")—the part suggested by that one of the many pathetic sublimities of the Bible, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," is in a lofty and enchanting strain, in Taylor's best manner. The intervention may be suspected of a slight degree of beautiful fallacy ; but there is truth enough to sustain the sublimity. This is doubtless the most elevated part of the work ; and it bears something analogous to the celestial roseate hue which forms an evening vision of such exquisite beauty on the summits of the highest mountains.

The main substance, however, of what we should regard as the most useful in the book, consists in a certain portion of the striking illustrations and solemn enforcements of those trite topics, the shortness and uncertainty of life, the unsatisfactory nature of sublunary things, and the dreadful folly of forgetting the approach of death and judgment. For the vigorous, and, if we may so express it, fulminating manner in which these subjects are forced on the reader's mind, we should deem the republication a service to the public, in spite of the grave exceptions it is impossible to help making, to both the style and the matter of the work. And also to some persons not hitherto acquainted with Taylor, and deficient in the courage for approaching him amid his formidable array of folios and quartos, this small volume may serve as a specimen highly characteristic, though on the whole estimate not quite equal in quality to the average merit of a similar quantity of composition taken in some of his best works. Within the space of a few pages, any

where, there is something above the reach of ordinary writers. It is true, at the same time, that Taylor, like other distinguished divines of the same age, had the fault of an indiscriminating and immeasurable copiousness. He seems to go on writing absolutely every thing that occurs to him, without the slightest attempt at selection or compression. There is consequently inter-fused through the composition, in a very considerable proportion, matter of an indifferent quality, a multitude of make-weight and inert sentences, among which the reader must not be surprised to meet some of the humblest common-places and truisms. But he really *cannot* help surprise at the excessive credulity of which this volume affords several exemplifications. The author seems not to have had the slightest surmise of mendacity or credulity in the authorities on which he describes the Egyptian Thebes, as a city of which "most of the houses were of alabaster marble, spotted with drops of gold," and which had a hundred gates, "out of each one of which there issued ten thousand armed men, which in the whole came to be an army of a million." But this is an utter trifle to what immediately follows: he tells us with all the apparent gravity of the most perfect faith, that,

"Marcus Polus writes, that he passed by the city of *Quinsay*, which contained *fourscore millions of souls*: and Nicholas de Conti, passing not many years after by the same way, found the city wholly destroyed, and begun to be newly built after another form. But yet greater than this was the city of Nineveh, &c.

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[September, October, and November, 1817.]

A Series of Discourses on the Christian Revelation viewed in Connexion with the Modern Astronomy. By THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D., Minister of the Tron Church, Glasgow. 8vo.

IF infidelity is so busily and zealously intent on its purpose, that no means of offence against Revelation can be too inconsiderable to be eagerly seized for the use of the warfare, it may be conceived what a value will be set on any reinforcements that can be obtained from the dignified resources of the sublimest science. If the pettiest quibbles, if witticisms, smart or dull, or the lying wonders of popery, or Chinese chronology, or the virtues of Mahomedans and Pagans, are all welcome for the array against Christianity, what proud exultation may well be felt at the view of any possibility of engaging "the stars in their courses to fight against" it.

Any possible result of this ambitious attempt, may be awaited by the believer in Christianity, with perfect tranquillity. He stands on a ground so independent of science, that nothing within the *possibility* of scientific speculation and discovery can essentially affect it. A train of miracles, attested in the most authoritative manner that is within the competence of history; the evidence afforded by prophecies fulfilled, that the author of Revelation is the Being who sees into futurity; the manifestation, in revealed religion, of a super-human knowledge of the nature and condition of man; the adaptation of the remedial system to that condition; the incomparable excellence of the Christian morality; the analogy between the Works of God and what claims to be the Word of God; and the interpositions with respect to the cause and the adherents of religion in the course of the Divine government on the earth:—this grand coincidence of verifications has not left the faith

of the disciple of Christianity at the mercy of optics and geometry. He may calmly tell science to mind its own affairs, if it should presume, with pretensions to authority, to interfere with his religion.

He may content himself thus to repel the arrogance of science, when it intrudes in the spirit of a proud and inimical interference. But if, in a large and enlightened contemplation, it is found that science comes to be in harmony with religion, and even to subserve and magnify it, such tribute and alliance are by all means to be accepted. All wise men will protest against that feeling which some good men seem willing to entertain, as if the more limited and exclusive a thing religion could be made the better; a feeling which may have sometimes been heard to utter itself in expressions like these: "Beware of losing your religion in those delusive vanities to which you give the denomination of enlarged views, sublime contemplations, and the like. What have we, or our religion, to do with the universe, or its fancied inhabitants? The business of religion is the salvation of our souls; and if we are duly attentive to that concern, we shall have no time or inclination for vain speculations about the economy of other worlds and races, about the moral condition of people in the stars." It is easy to reply, by remarking, that the amazing fact, placed within the evidence of our senses, of the existence of a countless and inconceivable multitude of worlds, each of them of a magnitude to which ours is but an insignificant ball, cannot be thus lightly disposed of, but demands a sentiment corresponding to such a fact; that, as one Being has created and sustains them all, they may rationally be conceived to constitute one system, in the sense of being formed and arranged on a scheme which combines them all in a relation to one another, in reference, at least to an ultimate effect or object which they are co-operating to accomplish; that, if any principles or illustrative phenomena of this grand union can be descried, they are obviously available for the loftiest purposes of religion; that, whether they can or not, the amazing vision of the universe simply, in its mere mass

and infinity of magnificence, tends mightily to exalt our conception of the Divinity; and that, therefore, to affect to render so much the greater homage to the principle and purpose of religion, in regarding the grandeur of the universe as quite foreign to it, would more justly incur the suspicion of contractedness of intellect, than claim to be regarded as a concentration of piety, too intent on the personal interest of religion to go so far abroad in imagination.

In this series of discourses, it appears to be quite as much the eloquent Author's object to co-extend the truths and feelings of revealed religion, with the demonstrations and speculations of astronomy, to the utmost vastness of its field, thus at once giving the amplitude of the science to religion, and the sanctity of religion to the science,—as to defend religion against the objections attempted to be drawn from the discoveries of astronomy.*

* Most of our readers will recollect that the topic, especially in this latter view, has been treated at considerable length, and with great ability, by the late Mr. A. Fuller, in a chapter entitled, *The Consistency of the Scripture Doctrine of Redemption with the modern opinion of the Magnitude of Creation*, in his book, *The Gospel its own Witness*. In that chapter are to found, in a brief condensed form, several of the arguments and illustrations so ingeniously and splendidly amplified in the discourses of Dr. Chalmers, and it may be recommended to accompany the study of the Doctor's work. Very forcible in argument as that essay is, in parts it appears to us, nevertheless, to be marked with the characteristic defects of the strong and excellent writer,—a want of comprehensive expansion of thought, and an unwarranted positiveness in assumptions and inferences. Throughout the discussion, it is evident the writer has a most inefficient conception of the magnificence of the Universe. The idea does not in the least either elate or overwhelm his mind. There is no earnest, exulting, still confounded, still renewed endeavour to go out in contemplation of the stupendous and awful vision; no amazement or rapture at this manifestation of the immensity of the creating and sustaining power; no full impression of the demonstrated and almost infinite insignificance of this planet, as a material object. He admits, in terms marked by no emphasis, and betraying no delight, that there may be probability in the theory of "a multiplicity of worlds, inhabited by intelligent beings," but seems unwilling that probability should have its full effect, for he throws in, for the purpose of counteraction, the loose and not very pertinent remark that, "it is an opinion that has taken place of other opinions, which in their day were admired by the philosophical part of mankind as much as this is in ours."—Even

The first half of the performance, however, keeps in view the argument against Christianity, which "does

setting aside the idea of inhabitants, and a moral economy of so many worlds, he no where uses language implying any thing at all approaching to a proper recognition of the plain facts and certainties of modern astronomy, as to the mere extent of the Creation. It may be suspected that he had a degree of horror of so vast a contemplation.

If we are correct in these remarks, it follows that the acute author was not well qualified for the discussion, since he could not be adequately sensible of the extent of the difficulty, as arising from the stupendous magnitude of the Universe. For the extent of view that he takes, he reasons with great force, and some parts of his reasoning will justly apply to the subject in the amplest view in which it is possible to contemplate it; but in estimating the whole effect of the essay, we are constrained to feel that millions of worlds, or rather millions of systems of worlds, are not to be wielded by that kind of short straight-forward logic, by which the excellent author was so successful on some subjects.

His facility and confidence of assumption are shown in some most unqualified, unhesitating assertions, (in the way of interpretation of, or inference from, some passages of Scripture, of uncertain extent of meaning,) that the attention of the whole intelligent creation is occupied with the condition and salvation of the human race: and the assertions are made in that easy tone in which we pronounce an ordinary and unquestionable truth which involves no manner of difficulty.

It appears to us one of the most obvious characteristics of Mr. Fuller's mind, that he was but little sensible of the *mystery* of any subject, or of the difficulties arising in the view of its deep and remote relations,—or if we may use the fashionable term, bearings. To a certain extent, and that unquestionably a respectable one, he apprehended and reasoned with admirable clearness and force; and he could not, or would not, surmise that any thing of importance in the *rationale* of the subject extended beyond that compass: he made therefore his propositions, his deductions, his conclusions, quite in the tone of a complacent self-assurance of being perfectly master of the subject: while in fact the subject might involve wider and remoter considerations, not indeed easily reducible to the plain tangible predicaments of his rough, confined logic, but essential to a comprehensive speculation, and very possibly, of a nature to throw great dubiousness on the judgment which he had so decidedly formed, and positively pronounced, on a too contracted view of the subject.

The last paragraph but one of this essay, or section, affords a striking example of the cool confident facility with which this respectable author could sometimes dispose of the most mysterious and awful subjects, by the help of a false analogy. Observing that the final misery of the wicked is, as a part of the Divine Government, satisfactorily accounted for on the principle of the necessity of an example of justice, for the contemplation of God's other intelligent subjects, even though there should *not* be so many of them as to inhabit a multiplicity of worlds,—he adds, that

not," our author says, "occupy a very pre-eminent place in any of our Treatises of Infidelity, but is often met with in conversation ; and we have known it to be the cause of serious perplexity and alarm in minds anxious for the solid establishment of their religious faith."

"This argument involves in it an assertion and an inference. The assertion is, that Christianity is a religion which professes to be designed for the single benefit of our world : and the inference is, that God cannot be the Author of this religion, for he would not lavish on so insignificant a field such peculiar and such distinguishing attentions as are ascribed to him in the Old and New Testament."

To meet the objectors in the fullest, boldest manner, but also with the further and higher purpose, no doubt, of aiding the mind in its apprehension of that Spirit who is the sovereign possessor of all existence, the preacher commences with a magnificent view of the Modern Astronomy. Great indeed may well be the dismay of

nevertheless that part of the Divine Government is placed in a still more satisfactory light, if it be true that there is such a vast population of the universe, for that then the disproportion may be so much the greater between the number of the beings who eternally suffer, and the number of the other beings who are to benefit from those sufferings : insomuch that "to those who judge of things impartially, and upon an extensive scale, it [this final perdition] will appear to contain no more of a disparagement to the government of the universe, than the execution of a murderer, once in a hundred years, would be to the government of a nation."

It is very wonderful how so acute a writer should deem such a comparison adapted for a triumphant close of the discussion. How did he fail to perceive the enormous fallacy introduced by adding rare and momentary occurrence to diminutiveness of number ? how fail to perceive that any analogy must be infinitely absurd which should not include *perpetual* suffering, and that in the identical being ? The case indeed admitted of no analogy ; since no parallel representation could be made without introducing the impossible supposition of a mortal criminal, kept perpetually alive to undergo the pains of a perpetual execution.

In closing this note, which has grown to a length very far beyond our intention, we do not think it requisite to use many words in avowal of our high estimate of the intellect and the general energy of mind of the distinguished and lamented divine : who, indeed has any *other* estimate ? But neither can there need any apology to even his warmest friends, for the expression of an opinion in which probably more than a few will coincide, that his writings are too often marked with an assumption, and an air of having perfectly disposed of the matter, which could barely be allowed in a mind of the very largest comprehension.

those religious persons who dread and detest being disturbed in the indolent quietude of their little homestead of thought, the narrow range of ideas which can be surveyed without an effort,—at hearing it demanded that the theory of religion be expanded to the compass of taking account of the Universe, a scene which, whatever may be its limits, is, as to the human power of comprehension, much the same as infinite, and demanded for the plain reason, that religion being the intellectual apprehension and the moral sentiment due to God, and this idea and sentiment being justly required to correspond to the whole of the manifestations which that Being has made of his glory, the lustre and immensity of such manifestations, presented through the entire visible creation, place all that creation within the cognizance of religion: so that a religion which should decline to include these innumerable and far-off displays of Deity within its comprehension, in forming its conception of the attributes, the works, and the government of the Almighty, would therein choose to content itself with a less glorious idea of him, and to offer him a less sublime worship, than that Being has given us the means to form and to offer.

While, however, such a representation may be received ungraciously by minds that have never once surmised such a thing as an obligation enforced upon our religion, as to the extent of its contemplations, by the remotest stars discovered by the telescope, we are very confident that many serious but partially cultivated persons, who have been impatient of the conscious narrowness of the scope of their religious ideas, will be greatly and devotionally benefited by this sublime introductory discourse of Dr. Chalmers.

In advancing into the regions of astronomy, in the spirit of religion, he takes both his text and his tone from a writer in whose mind the magnificence of the modern astronomy, could its wonders have been revealed to him, would have but inspired a so much the more exalted devotion.

"The Psalmist takes a still loftier flight. He leaves the world, and lifts his imagination to that mighty expanse which spreads above it and around it. He wings his way through space, and wanders in thought over its immeasurable regions. Instead of a dark and unpeopled solitude, he sees it crowded with splendour, and filled with the energy of the Divine presence. Creation rises in its immensity before him, and the world, with all which it inherits, shrinks into littleness at a contemplation so vast and so overpowering. He wonders that he is not overlooked amid the grandeur and the variety which are on every side of him; and passing upward from the majesty of nature, to the majesty of nature's Architect, he exclaims, 'What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him?'

"There is much in the scenery of a nocturnal sky, to lift the soul to pious contemplation. That moon, and these stars, what are they? They are detached from the world, and they lift you above it. You feel withdrawn from the earth, and rise in lofty abstraction above this little theatre of human passions and human anxieties. The mind abandons itself to reverie, and is transferred in the ecstasy of its thoughts, to distant and unexplored regions. It sees nature in the simplicity of her great elements, and it sees the God of nature invested with the high attributes of wisdom and majesty.

"But what can these lights be? The curiosity of the human mind is insatiable, and the mechanism of these wonderful heavens, has, in all ages, been its subject and its employment. It has been reserved for these latter times, to resolve this great and interesting question. The sublimest powers of philosophy have been called to the exercise, and astronomy may now be looked on as the most certain and best established of the sciences."

The rapid and comprehensive "Sketch," which is quite in the manner of a person familiar with the speculations and facts of astronomy, begins with the planets of our sun, and the philosophic Divine illustrates the very strong probability of their being inhabited. He argues from their magnitude, and their several striking points of analogy to this world of ours. They have their movements on their own axes, their regular periodical revolutions round the sun, and their vicissitudes of seasons. Several of them have moons to alleviate the darkness of their night.

"We can see of one, that its surface rises into inequalities, that it swells into mountains and stretches into valleys; of another, that it is surrounded with an atmosphere which may support the respiration of animals; of a third, that clouds are formed and suspended over it, which may minister to it all the bloom and luxuriance of vegetation; and of a fourth, that a white colour spreads over its northern regions, as its winter advances, and that on the approach of summer this whiteness is

dissipated—giving room to suppose, that the element of water abounds in it, that it rises by evaporation into its atmosphere, that it freezes upon the application of cold, that it is precipitated in the form of snow, that it covers the ground with a fleecy mantle, which melts away from the heat of a more vertical sun; and that other worlds bear a resemblance to our own in the same yearly round of beneficent and interesting changes."

We will acknowledge some little defect of sympathy with the delight which Dr. Chalmers expresses at the ascertainment of so very close an analogy as indicated in this last instance. Really this downright "fleecy" phenomenon of winter falls somewhat chilly on that animated visionary and half poetical idea, which we should have been better pleased to have been permitted to entertain of the physical condition of the inhabitants of these other worlds. This hemisphere of snow not only shuts down too much in the way of an extinguisher on that enchanting imagery of a local economy in which the imagination would have loved to place those unknown races of beings, and forcibly suggests ideas of dreariness, hardships, and even morbid physical affections, and hostility to life; it would also, as possibly or probably accompanied by these physical evils, seem too ominous of something much worse. The mind is forced to admit some fearful surmise of the too possible existence, in those worlds, of that horrible thing which has blasted the natural beauties and delights, and mainly created the natural evils, of these terrestrial scenes. An analogy so very close to an order of elemental nature which in this world inflicts so much inconvenience and suffering, in which suffering, though immediately inflicted by the instrumentality of the elements, we have the effect of sin, must throw us on the ground of some abstracted moral considerations, to maintain our obstinate hope that this infernal plague has not invaded the people of those abodes.

The passage we have transcribed is followed by one in which, highly picturesque as it is, the Doctor's elated imagination has carried him into a very palpable extravagance, in conjecturing such possibilities of improvement in the artificial subsidiaries to sight, as shall bring

at last to our perception the green of the planetary vegetation, the dead wintry hue induced by its disappearance, the marks of cultivation extending over tracts previously wild, and even the cities forming the central seats of mighty empires. Were we obliged to go the whole length which analogy might seem to lead in shaping to our imaginations the economy of those regions, might we not reasonably be glad that such distinctness of detection as our Author is willing to anticipate, is physically impossible, lest there should otherwise have been some danger of our having at length the mortification to descry such things as munitions of war, or idol's temples, or popish cathedrals?

There can be no scruple in assuming, a general principle, that it is in the highest degree improbable the Almighty Spirit should have constructed vast fabrics of Matter, to remain disconnected from Mind, as a conscious power to which those fabrics may be available for use. Useless to the Creator himself, they would be useless absolutely, if not serving to the purpose of the occupancy, and support, and activity, and contemplation, of sentient intelligent creatures. Prodigious orbs, disposed too in the order and movement of system, but thus desolate, and dead, and merely running vast circles in space, would really suggest something like the idea (we speak with reverence) of the Creator's amusing himself with an ingenious contrivance.—Any notion that the other planets of the solar system were created for the use of this earth, would be now too ridiculous for the grossest ignorance to dream.

When to this consideration, of the extreme improbability of immense conformations of matter being made to be devoid of the occupancy of mind, is added the whole account of the ascertained points of analogy between the other planets and our own, we think that, excepting to minds repugnant to magnificent ideas, the probability that the other orbs of our system are inhabited worlds, must appear so great, that a direct revelation from heaven declaring the fact, would make but very little difference in our assurance of it.

Following the discoveries of science no further than the limits of this solar system, we behold them, says Dr. Chalmers,

—"widening the empire of creation far beyond the limits which were formerly assigned to it. They give us to see that yon sun, throned in the centre of his planetary system, gives light, and warmth, and the vicissitude of seasons, to an extent of surface several hundreds of times greater than that of the earth which we inhabit. They lay open to us a number of worlds, rolling in their respective circles round this vast luminary—and prove that the ball which we tread upon, with all its mighty burden of oceans and continents, instead of being distinguished from the others, is among the least of them; and, from some of the more distant planets, would not occupy a visible point in the concave of their firmament. They let us know that though this mighty earth, with all its myriads of people, were to sink into annihilation, there are some worlds where an event so awful to us would be unnoticed and unknown, and others where it would be nothing more than the disappearance of a little star which had ceased from its twinkling."

But how humiliating it is to the proud ambition of the human faculties, that thus we are already almost overwhelmed with images of grandeur when we have hardly made a first step, hardly an infant's step, in that stupendous excursion to which the mind is summoned forth,—summoned, not by wild fancy or poetry, but by grave peremptory science, with a plain austerity as if in scorn that such a thing as poetry should have been suffered to pretend to a loftier sublimity than truth and fact. It is indeed most striking to observe how all the sublimities of imagination and invention dwindle and grow dim as placed in comparative measurement against the virtual infinity of the system of visible existence; as brought into the converging light of indefinite millions of suns. It is not only that this immensity of splendid material substance has, simply so contemplated, an overpowering magnificence, rendered inconceivably more august by the accession of the idea that intelligent beings in multitudes beyond all knowledge, or calculation, or conjecture, of any intelligence but One, dwell in the universe of daylight emanating from all these luminaries; the ultimate sublimity of all this glory of material existence is, that it gives the sign every where, through its immeasurable extent, of the presence of another Existence.

The mystery of a pure Spirit, infinite, and yet bearing no relation to place, so confounds the understanding, and something at least *analogous* to vast extension is so necessary to our conception of magnitude of being, that the mind is glad, in essaying to contemplate the greatness of the Divine Essence, to accept in aid *the effect* of boundless local extension, in the way of a distinct recognition of that Essence as present in one, and in another, and in each, and in all, of the material glories of an indefinite universe: and this it can in some measure do, or at least is beguiled to feel as if it could, without directly attributing to that Spirit a physical mode of extension from one part and one limit of the creation to another and the opposite. Thus the material universe, with all its splendours and magnitudes, ascertained, conjectured, or possible, may be regarded—not as a vehicle, not as an inhabited form, or a comprehending sphere, of the Sovereign Spirit, but as a type, which signifies, though by a faint, inadequate correspondence after all, that as great as the universe is in the material attributes of extension and splendour, so great is the Divine Being in the infinitely transcendent nature of spiritual existence. The least and narrowest idea to be entertained is, that *in this spiritual and transcendent mode* the predominating intelligence has the extension of the universe.—What emphasis will such a view give to the sentence of the poet,

“An undevout astronomer is mad.”

And yet how seldom do we find the magnificent images of astronomy brightened into still nobler lustre by the spirit of piety which gives them so consecrated a character in the work of Dr. Chalmers.

From the solar system the inquiring contemplation is carried to those other countless luminaries, all shining from such an inconceivable distance. The preacher passes rapidly, and with a commanding reach of thought, over the most wonderful facts and speculations of the subject. The distance is the first of the facts which so defy human comprehension.

“If the whole planetary system were lighted up into a globe of fire, it would appear only a small lucid point from the nearest of the fixed stars. If a body were projected from the sun with the velocity of a cannon-ball, it would take hundreds of thousands of years before it described that mighty interval which separates the nearest of them from our sun and our system. If this earth, which moves at more than the inconceivable velocity of a million and a half miles a day, were to be hurried from its orbit, and to take the same rapid flight over this immense tract, it would not have arrived at the termination of its journey after taking all the time which has elapsed since the creation of the world. These are great numbers, and great calculations, and the mind feels its own impotency in attempting to grasp them. We can state them in words; we can exhibit them in figures; we can demonstrate them by the powers of a most rigid and infallible geometry. But no human fancy can summon up a lively or an adequate conception.”

The immense magnitude, so demonstrated, of those stars; their shining with their own light; the “periodical variations of light” observed in some of them, as probable indication of a revolution, as in the case of our own solar star, on their axes; authorize a most undoubting assumption, (opposed by no argument, and confirmed by the consideration that so much the mightier is the display of the Creator’s glory,) that they are all the central lights of so many systems.

As to their number, “the unassisted eye can take in a thousand, and the best telescope which the genius of man has constructed, can take in *eighty millions*.” And nothing, as our author suggests, could be more irrational than to fancy that the utmost number of such luminaries comprised in the universe, may be just that number which the people of one of the planets of one of the suns, have, at a particular period of time, contrived optical instruments competent for descrying. Quite as reasonable would the assumption have been upon the discoveries by means of the first telescope that was made, as upon those of Herschel. When we reflect what kind of creature it is to whose view thus much of the universe has been disclosed,—that the physical organ of this very perception, is of such a nature that it might, in consequence of the extinction of life, be reduced to dust within a few short days after it had admitted rays from the stars; while, as to his mental part, he is, besides his moral debasement, at the very bottom of the gradation

of probably innumerable millions of intellectual races (certainly at the bottom, since a being inferior to man in intellect, could not be rational)—when we think of this, it will appear utterly improbable that the portion of the universe which such a creature can take knowledge of, should be more than a very diminutive tract in the vast expansion of existence. And if the subject be considered in reference to the Supreme Originating Power, the probability becomes indefinitely stronger, that beyond the sphere of our perceptions, enlarged as it is by artificial aids, there is all but infinitely more of material existence than there is within its compass. It being demonstrated by that vastness of material glory which is ascertained to exist, that magnitude and multitude were of the essence of the Creator's plan, we are well authorized in the assurance that the magnitude and the multitude must be on the most transcendent scale, a scale approaching as near toward a correspondence to the infinite supremacy of his own nature, as finiteness of one nature can (if we may be pardoned such expedients of expression) towards infiniteness of another. It is therefore but little to say, that the material creation is probably of such an extent that the greatest of created beings not only have never yet been able to survey it all, but never will to all eternity. For must it not be one great object in the Creator's design, that this magnitude should make a sublime and awful impression on his intelligent creatures? But if the magnitude is to make this impression, what would be the impression made on created spirits by their coming to the end, the boundary, of this magnitude? It is palpable that this latter impression must counteract the former. So that if the stupendous extension of the works of God was intended and adapted to promote, in the contemplations of the highest intelligences, an indefinitely glorious though still incompetent conception of the Divine infinity, the ascertaining of the limit, the distinct perception of the finiteness, of that manifestation of power, would tend with a dreadful force to repress and annihilate that conception; and it may well be imagined that if an exalted adoring

spirit could ever in eternity find himself at that limit, the perception would inflict inconceivable horror.—In short, this is the subject on which it is purely impossible to be extravagant, in the way of simple amplification and aggravation of thought. And there is not the slightest transgression of sobriety in the language of our author, when he speaks of “those mighty tracts, which shoot far beyond what eye hath seen or the heart of man conceived—which sweep endlessly along, *and merge into an awful and mysterious infinity* ;”—or when he adopts the conjecture, in explanation of the *nebulae*, that the fixed stars,

—“instead of lying uniformly, and in a state of equi-distance from each other, are arranged into distinct clusters ; that in the same manner as the distance of the nearest fixed stars, so inconceivably superior to our planets, from each other, marks the separation of the solar, so the distance of two contiguous clusters may be so inconceivably superior to the reciprocal distance of those fixed stars which belong to the same cluster, as to mark an equally distinct separation of the clusters, and to constitute each of them an individual member of some higher and more extended arrangement.”

—Or when, admonishing the philosopher against pride in the great discoveries of astronomy, he reminds him that there is

—“an unscaled barrier, beyond which no power either of eye or of telescope shall ever carry him ; that on the other side there is a height, and a depth, and a length, and a breadth, to which the whole of this concave and visible firmament, dwindles into the insignificancy of an atom ; and though all which the eye of man can take in, or his fancy grasp at, were swept away, there might still remain as ample a field over which the Divinity may expatiate, and which he may have peopled with innumerable worlds. If the whole visible creation were to disappear, it would leave a solitude behind it—but to the Infinite Mind, that can take in the whole system of nature, this solitude might be nothing, a small unoccupied point in that immensity which surrounds it, and which he may have filled with the wonders of his omnipotence. Though this earth were to be burned up, though the trumpet of its dissolution were sounded, though yon sky were to pass away as a scroll, and every visible glory which the finger of the Divinity has inscribed on it, were to be put out for ever—an event, so awful to us and to every world in our vicinity, by which so many suns would be extinguished, and so many varied scenes of life and of population would rush into forgetfulness—what is it in the high scale of the Almighty's workmanship ? a mere shred, which, though scattered into nothing, would leave the universe of God one entire scene of greatness and of majesty.”

We may be sure, as we have already suggested, that each of the elements of the manifestation of an Infinite Being, will do him justice thus far, that it will have a practical infiniteness relatively to the capacities of his intelligent creatures ; that the utmost that will be permitted to the comprehension of these intelligencies, will be the mere abstract truth that some of these elements cannot, from their very nature, be literally infinite ; that their amazement will be eternally augmented by the very circumstance of this sublime enigma, of an element which must thus by its nature be limited, and yet leaves them all, through the eternity of their experiments and excursions, as far from any sensible approach to the verification of the limit, as at the first step they made into the mysterious expansion. But if we take our conjecture of the intellectual magnitude, and the probable excursive powers, of the highest of the created beings, from the consideration of the infinite power and beneficence of the Creator, and of what it is rationally probable that such a Being would create in the nature of mental existences, to admire, adore, and serve him, we shall be warranted to imagine beings to whom it may be possible exultingly to leave sun-beams far behind them in the rapidity of their career, from systems to systems still beyond. And if we add to the account the equal probability of a perpetual augmentation of their powers in a ratio correspondent to a magnitude already so stupendous, and crown it with the idea of an indefatigable exertion of those powers in discovery and contemplation of the Creator's manifestations through everlasting ages—there will then be required a universe to which all that the telescope has descried is but as an atom ; a universe of which it shall not be within the *possibilities* of any intelligence less than the infinite to know.

“ Where rears the Terminating Pillar high
Its extramundane head.”

We need not dwell on the considerations, on the ground of which Dr. Chalmers insists it would be most absurd to disbelieve, absurd even to doubt, that this boundless

multitude of worlds, this scene of almighty power and glory, is populous through all its systems with contemplators and worshippers of the Divinity.

If such a representation give, after all, but an infinitely feeble glimmer of the truth, respecting the magnitude of the creation, we may, in the name of both sense and piety, assume, with the utmost confidence, to repeat our reprehension of that mode of religious faith and sentiment, which would pretend to have so much the more of celestial light for excluding the beams of all the stars.

What is it, we would ask, that comes upon us in those beams,—in the beams of those luminaries which are beheld by the naked eye, next of those countless myriads beheld by the assisted eye, and then of those infinite legions which can never be revealed to the earth, but are seen by an elevated imagination, and will perhaps burst with sudden and awful effulgence on the departed spirit? *What* is it, but the pure unmingled reflection of Him who cannot be beheld in himself, who, present to all things, is yet in the darkness of infinite and eternal mystery, subsisting in an essence unparticipated, unapproached by gradation of other beings, impalpable to all speculation, refined beyond angelic perception, foreign from all analogy—but who condescends to become visible in the *effects* of his nature, in the lustre of his works? And is it not, we ask again, one of the grand difficulties in religion, and one of the things most ardently to be desired, to obtain a glorious idea of the Divinity, passing afar from that littleness and anthropomorphism which so confine and degrade our contemplations and devotions? It cannot but be one of the plainest *duties* of religion, to aspire to the attainment of such an idea. And therefore a strong remonstrance may justly be directed to the *conscience* of a professed worshipper who cares not how little of the element of sublimity there may be in his conception of the adorable object,—who feels no *religious* mortification to think that the grandest idea of the Almighty which he does effectually realize in his mind, is in all probability prodigiously below what would be the true and full representative idea of one of the highest angels.

We have expatiated thus out of all proportion on the first part of this interesting volume, from a consideration of the unquestionable fact, that there is among serious persons a quite *irreligious* neglect of one of the two grand forms of divine revelation, the Word and the Works of the Almighty ; and that even among Christian teachers there is often a very unthinking and ill-discriminating mode of depreciating the latter, in the comparison ; a practice against which they might have been warned by observing the endless references in the Word of that Being to his Works ; and by observing how very often the Word rests the fulness of the meaning of its dictates and illustrations upon an adequate view of the Works. They might have been made aware to what a littleness of significance a thousand expressions in the Bible, relating to the Deity himself, are reduced by a want of extended and admiring ideas of the labours, if we may so express it, and the magnificent empire, of the Sovereign Spirit. They might have been taught to suspect that it must be a very doubtful Christian excellence to be but little in sympathy with those devout minds which, in the very condition and act of being the channels of divine communication to mankind, were so often elated at the view of suns and starry heavens, even at a period when the vision of those wonders was littleness itself in comparison of that magnificence to which science has now expanded it. Not, assuredly, that Christian teachers should become deep students in science, or lecturers on astronomy ; but the great elementary views of the universe are of easy attainment, and have a simplicity readily available for magnifying our contemplations, and our representations, of the divine majesty. We trust Dr. Chalmers's work will prove in this respect of very eminent value and use to the religious public.

Such a view of the magnitude of the creation shows the inconceivable insignificance of this our world ; inso-much that, according to our author's simile, its total annihilation would be no more sensible a loss to the universe, than the falling of a leaf into a stream which carries it away, with a destruction of all its multitude of

microscopic animalculæ, would be to an ample forest. Such is the importance in the universe, of the globe which appears so wide a scene to its intelligent inhabitants, baffling by its long succession of region after region, the realizing power of their imagination;—the globe, of which the most protracted journeying life would suffice but for the survey of a very small portion;—for the ascendancy over narrow sections of which, opposed millions have, through every age, been inflamed to mutual bloodshed and extermination;—for the acquisition of little specks of which, in an appropriation through a few fleeting years, innumerable individuals are at all times toiling with an ardour which merges all other interests;—of which, in short, its transient inhabitants are seeking to make a Heaven and a God. Such, relatively to the grand whole, is the importance of this orb, and of the creatures to whom it appears so immense and interesting an object. Truly, it was reserved for the Modern Astronomy to supply an adequate commentary on our author's text: "Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?"

But here, instead of an humble and adoring gratitude that the Almighty *does*, nevertheless, visit man, in ways of marvellous condescension and benignity, there comes in the malignant suggestion, that our world being so trivial an object in the creation, it is absurd to imagine that the Being who presides over it all should give such attention to this atom of existence, as the Christian religion represents him to do, and therefore the religion that so represents cannot be true.

"Is it likely, says the infidel, that God would send his eternal Son, to die for the puny occupiers of so insignificant a province in the mighty field of his creation? Are we the befitting objects of so great and so signal an interposition? Does not the largeness of that field which astronomy lays open to the view of modern science, throw a suspicion over the truth of the gospel history; and how shall we reconcile the greatness of that wonderful movement which was made in heaven for the redemption of fallen man, with the comparative meanness and obscurity of our species?"

"Such a humble portion of the universe as ours, could never have been the object of such high and distinguishing attentions as Christianity

has assigned to it. God would not have manifested himself in the flesh for the salvation of so paltry a world. The monarch of a whole continent would never move from his capital, and lay aside the splendour of royalty; and subject himself for months, or for years, to perils and poverty, and persecution; and take up his abode in some small islet of his dominions, which, though swallowed by an earthquake, could not be missed amid the glories of so wide an empire; and all this to gain the lost affections of a few families upon its surface."

How little apprehension our Author, as a Christian advocate, felt at meeting this objection, appears from the ambitious delight with which he has dilated the view of that grandeur of the Universe, on which the objection is founded. He proceeds to the argument for silencing it, in the Second Discourse, which commences with some striking observations on the imperfect community of feeling and of intellectual perception between human beings. These are made to bear on the character of Sir Isaac Newton, in the way of representing that the generality of even cultivated men are perfectly unapprized of, and incapable of adequately estimating, some of the most important circumstances in the agency of that philosopher's mind. They look at his brilliant discoveries, and admire, in a general way, the mighty force of genius and intellect so obviously manifested in them; but have no comprehension, and from the nature of the case can have none, of that absolutely sublime self-command and self-denial which accompanied, in continual exercise, the process which resulted in so vast an extension of the dominion of science. They cannot be aware what a course and what a magnitude of achievement it was, of self-emancipation from all pre-occupying systems and notions; of calm endurance of the hostility of those who could not be so emancipated; of repression of all temerity of speculation that might have sprung from conscious power and success; of invincible coolness and persevering labour amid the dazzling disclosure of magnificent novelty; of resistance to all the beguilement of the splendid plausibilities which must often have presented their sudden fascinations to such a mind in such a career; in short, of incorruptible reason, which never lost sight of the tests of truth, nor failed to acknowledge submis-

sively the limits to the range of the human intellect. An entire exemption from arrogance and presumption, and an invariable, inviolable fidelity to the principle of admitting nothing but solid evidence as the foundation of any part of his theories, are described as the distinctive qualities of what may be called the moral government of Newton's intellectual powers and operations. With just indignation therefore our Author reprehends the ignorant arrogance of pretenders to philosophy, who, come into possession of Newton's grand discoveries, with an ease which might have precluded, but does not preclude, any indulgence of such an impertinent feeling as pride, avail themselves in the prosecution of other speculations, of these great conquests of science, in a spirit perfectly the reverse of that of the mighty thinker who made them: of which anti-philosophical, and anti-Newtonian spirit, one of the most remarkable samples is this argument against Christianity.

Dr. Chalmers exposes, with great force of aggravating illustrations, the total baselessness and extravagant arrogance of the assumption that the dispensation of the Messiah does in no manner involve or affect any other tribes of beings than the human race. It must be confessed that the matter is carried somewhat to the extreme in supposing, as a parallel case, such a hardly possible absurdity as that of a man's gravely delineating, on the ground of assumptions drawn from some general analogies among the planetary worlds, a scheme of a department of the natural history,—of the botany, for instance, of some of the planets, and proceeding to the length of theorizing on the moral temperament of their inhabitants. There is some trifle less temerity in hazarding negative general assertions, than in hazarding positive specific statements, respecting the unknown economy of other worlds. The parallel holds, however, in the essential point of absolute want of all evidence, and therefore of all reasonable ground for the assertions.

“How do infidels know that Christianity is set up for the single benefit of this earth and its inhabitants? How are they able to tell us that if you go to other planets the person and the religion of Jesus are there

unknown? We challenge them to the proof of this said positive announcement of theirs. We see in this objection a glaring transgression on the spirit and the maxims of that very philosophy which they profess to idolize. They have made their argument against us out of an assertion which has positively no feet to rest upon—an assertion which they have no means whatever of verifying—an assertion, the truth or the falsehood of which can only be gathered out of some supernatural message, for it lies completely beyond the range of human observation."

Those who raised the objection were aware that, to give it full effect it was necessary the religion itself should be made accessory to its own intended humiliation; that the Book professing to be a comprehensive revelation of its constitution, should be understood to avow, or most decidedly imply, that the pretended mediatorial economy of the Son of God, is limited exclusively to the human race. It was obvious that, unless this were understood, the hostile argument must, in every way, and in every part, be founded on a pure assumption. But it is curious to observe, how easily and unceremoniously this prerequisite fact was taken for granted; and without, probably, one hour's impartial inquiry how the Bible does actually represent the matter, it was confidently affirmed, as a thing liable to no question, that the pretended dispensation of the Messiah is by the import of its own declaration restricted from any wider sphere than that of man and his interests.

Now, it is positively denied that the Scriptures make any such representation; it is next asserted without contradiction, that no such information has come by any *other* superhuman communication; and when it is added that there is nothing in the nature of the case to justify or countenance any such assumption, the infidel's asserted fact, from which he infers that Christianity is an imposture, is exploded away. The argument is the simplest and the shortest possible; but it is amplified with great force of imagination by Dr. Chalmers, in a series of bold suggestions of what *may* be true, as to the extent of the Christian economy, for any thing the infidel can know to the contrary.

"For any thing he can tell" [and with this precise phrase are pointed a whole quiver of assailant sentences,—no less than ten in immediate succession] "sin has found its way into other worlds. For any thing

he can tell, their people have banished themselves from communion with God. For any thing he can tell, many a visit has been made to each of them, on the subject of our common Christianity, by commissioned messengers from the throne of the Eternal," &c. &c. &c.

And is it not about as silly as it is arrogant, in these infidels, to affect *to dictate to religion what they choose it shall be*, that they may have the greater advantage against it? It seems much of a piece with that memorable proceeding of certain of the fraternity, the decreeing death to be an eternal sleep,—which made just no difference at all in the real attributes of death, and made a difference but so much for the worse in the feelings of whoever could, in such self-betraying folly and presumption, advance the more carelessly and confidently to the encounter with that formidable power. Neither death nor religion will consent to forego its qualities in obsequiousness to the arbitrary definitions of man; nor submit to the circumscription which it might be commodious to him impose.

The advocate of Christianity, then, confidently repels the assumption of its enemies as to the limitation of its sphere; but at the same time he is hardly less confident in the assurance that even were the assumption conceded to them, and were it avowed by the Christian revelation that the economy therein declared, in terms importing so marvellous an intervention of Deity, does really concentrate all these glories of grace and power on man exclusively,—even then it could easily be shown that the notion of this being so immeasurably out of all proportion to the despicable insignificance of this spot of earth and its inhabitants, that it is irrational to believe it, is a notion betraying great narrowness of mind,—proud as its entertainers are of this fancied elevation of thought.

On this lower ground Dr. Chalmers powerfully maintains the argument in the third Discourse, "On the Extent of the Divine Condescension." "Let us," he says, "*admit* the assertion [of the confined scope of the Christian economy] and take a view of the reasoning which has been constructed upon it." The exposure of this reasoning begins with the remark, (which expresses the essential prin-

ciple and force of the whole refutation,) that this doctrine of disbelief arises entirely from the combined feebleness and arrogance of the conception entertained of the Deity. It is a conception which presumes to limit the powers of that Being, and which takes its authority to do so from the very fact of the demonstrated immensity of those powers. By practically demonstrating his ability to make and sustain a system so amazingly vast, he has demonstrated his *inability* to give a distinct and perfect attention to each part. We cannot comprehend the possibility of the combination or union of this immense generality, and this absolutely perfect particularity, of the exercise of intelligence and power,—and therefore it is impossible, even to the Supreme Mind. In other words, that Mind has been too ambitious of being the God of an indefinite multitude of worlds and races, to be a God, in the fulness and perfect exercise of the Divine attributes, to any one of them in particular. The exceedingly monstrous absurdity, as well as presumption, of thus inferring littleness from greatness, and on the very ground that that greatness is proved to be infinitely transcendent, is exhibited in its just character, and with just reprobation, in several powerful and eloquent passages, too long too be transcribed. Who can think of the subject without being confounded at the dire perversity of the human mind, that thus, instead of following forth the plain, rational indication afforded by the fact of infinite perfection evinced in one mode, to the delightful, and sublime, and adoring effect of attributing perfection in all modes, would choose to violate the clearest rules of sense in order to degrade and eclipse the glorious idea of the Divine Nature;—as if to indemnify and avenge itself for the insignificance of its own!—God shall not in *every* way infinitely surpass man, and defy his comprehension. This is the principle, Dr. Chalmers says, of the kind of infidelity under consideration.

“To bring God to the level of our comprehension, we would clothe him in the impotency of a man. We would transfer to his wonderful mind all the imperfection of our own faculties. When we are taught by astronomy that he has millions of worlds to look after, and thus to

add in one direction to the glories of his character, we take away from them in another, by saying that each of these worlds must be looked after imperfectly. The use that we make of a discovery that should heighten our every conception of God, and humble us into the sentiment that a Being of such mysterious elevation is to us unfathomable, is to sit in judgment over him, aye, and to pronounce such a judgment as degrades him, and keeps him down to the standard of our own paltry imagination! We are introduced by modern science to a multitude of other suns and other systems; and the perverse interpretation we put upon the fact that God *can* diffuse the benefits of his power and his goodness over such a variety of worlds, is, that he *cannot*, or will not bestow so much goodness on one of those worlds, as a professed revelation from Heaven has announced to us."

The argument might be authoritatively insisted upon, and without fear of rational contradiction, that the exercise of intelligence and power manifested to demonstration in maintaining the system of the amazing whole, does *necessarily* include a distinct attention to all the constituent parts, down to the minutest. For, in the most general and the simplest notion possible of that comprehensive exercise, we make it take distinct account of the great leading and immediate constituents or components of the system, with their relations and adaptations; but these have also *their* constituents, by means of which they are what they are in themselves, and what they are relatively to the whole system; and then these again, these subordinates, have *their* constituents also, with their relations and adaptations; and so downward in an indefinite gradation. Now, it is evident that, throughout this retiring series, the state or constitution of things at each further remove, must depend on the state or constitution of things at the next remoter condition of their existence; and so onward, to that state of things, whatever it is, in which created existence has its essence and its primary constitution: so that the ultimate state of things, as appearing in a perfectly constituted universe, depends, through a long and continuously dependent gradation, on the nature and adaptations of their primary constituents. And how, therefore, can a given state of things in their ultimate constitution be secured without a certain condition of things being maintained in the primary mode of their existence? And

how can this be without the divine inspection and power being constantly exerted on them all in that, their original mode?

But not to seek the aid of these subtleties :—It is immediately obvious that an incomparably more glorious idea is entertained of the Divinity, by conceiving of him as possessing a wisdom and a power competent, without an effort, to maintain an infinitely perfect inspection and regulation, distinctly, of all subsistences, even the minutest, comprehended in the universe, than by conceiving of him as only maintaining some kind of general superintendence of the system,—only general, because a perfect attention to all existences individually would be too much, it is deemed, for the capacity of even the Supreme Mind. And for the very reason that this would be the most glorious idea of him, it must be the true one. To say that we can, in the abstract, conceive of a magnitude of intelligence and power which would constitute the Deity, *if he possessed it*, a more glorious and adorable Being than he actually is, could be nothing less than flagrant impiety.

On even such general and *à priori* grounds the preacher is authorized to meet the infidel objection by the following position :

“ That God, in addition to the bare faculty of dwelling on a multiplicity of objects at one and the same time, has this faculty in such wonderful perfection, that he can attend as fully, and provide as richly, and manifest all his attributes as illustriously, on every one of these objects, as if the rest had no existence, and no place whatever in his government or his thoughts.”

But, he insists chiefly and wisely on the strong and accumulated *proofs of fact*, that the divine intelligence and energy are thus all-pervading and all-distinguishing. He appeals, in the first place, to the personal history of each of his hearers, and of each individual of the species, as most simple and perfect evidence that God is maintaining, literally without the smallest moment's intermission, an exercise of attention and power inconceivably minute, and complex, and as it were concentrated, on each unit. Each is conscious of a being totally distinct

from all the rest ; as absolutely self-centered and circumscribed an individual as if there were no other such being on earth. And thus distinct is each as an object of the divine attention, which in a perfect manner recognizes the infinite and to us mysterious difference between the greatest possible likeness and identity. But think of the prodigious multitude of these separate beings, each requiring and monopolizing a regard and action of the Divine Spirit perfectly distinct from that which each of all the others requires and engages. A mere perception of every one of the perhaps thousand millions of human beings,—a perception that should simply keep in view through every moment each individual as a separate object, and without distinguishing any particulars in the being or circumstances of that object,—would evince a magnitude and mode of intelligence quite overwhelming to reflect upon. But then consider, that each one of these distinct objects is itself what may justly be denominated a system, combined of matter and spirit, comprising a vast complexity of principles, elements, mechanism, capacities, processes, liabilities, and necessities. What an inconceivable kind and measure, or rather magnitude beyond all measure, of sagacity, and power, and vigilance, are required to preserve *one* such being in a state of safety, and health, and intellectual sanity. But then, while the fact is before us, that so many millions are every moment so preserved, and that during thousands of years the same economy has been maintained, and that not a mortal has the smallest surmise but that it can, with perfect ease, be maintained for ages to come,—the suggestion that all this is *too much* for the Almighty, never once obtruding itself to disturb any man's tranquillity—while there is before us the practical illustration of a power combining such immense comprehension with such exquisite discrimination, how well it becomes our intellect and our humility to take upon us to decide *what* measure and manifestations of his attention such a Being may or may not confer upon one world, in a consistency of proportion with the attention which is to be perfect in its exercise on each and all !

The argument from the demonstrated perfect and continuous attention of the Divine Mind to objects comparatively insignificant, becomes indefinitely stronger when carried down to those forms of life which are brought to our knowledge by the utmost powers of the microscope. A doctrine or a disbelief founded on inference from one view of the works of God, must, to be rational, comport with the just inferences from every other. Yet those who justify their infidelity by the discoveries of the telescope, seem to have chosen to forget that there is another instrument, which has made hardly less wonderful discoveries in an opposite direction ; discoveries authorizing an inference completely destructive of that made from the astronomical magnitudes. And it is very gratifying to see the lofty assumptions drawn, in a spirit as unphilosophical as irreligious, from remote systems and the immensity of the universe, and advanced against Christianity with an air of irresistible authority,—to see them encountered and annihilated by evidences sent forth from tribes and races of beings, of which innumerable millions might pass under the intensest look of the human eye imperceptible as empty space. No need, for the discomfiture of these assailants making war in the pomp of suns and systems, of any thing even “so gross as beetles,” or as the hornets, locusts, and flies, which were arrayed against the pagans of former ages and other regions. In all their pride they are “crushed before” less than “the moth,” beyond all conception less. Indeed the diminutiveness of the victorious confronters of infidel arrogance, is the grand principle of their power ; inasmuch that the further they decline in an attenuation apparently toward nothing, the greater is their efficiency for this controversy ; and a might altogether incalculable and unlimited, for this holy service, resides in those beings of which it is no absurdity nor temerity to assume that myriads may inhabit an atom, itself too subtile for the perception of the eye of man.

Let a reflective man, when he stands in a garden, or a meadow, or a forest, or on the margin of a pool, consider

what there is within the circuit of a very few feet around him, and that too exposed to the light, and with no veil for concealment from his sight, but nevertheless invisible to him. It is *certain* that within that little space there are organized beings, each of marvellous construction, independent of the rest, and endowed with the mysterious principle of vitality, to the amount of a number which could not have been told by units if there could have been a man so employed from the time of Adam to this hour. Let him indulge for a moment the idea of such a perfect transformation of his faculties as that all this population should become visible to him, each and any individual being presented to his perception as a distinct object of which he could take the same full cognizance as he now can of the large living creatures around him. What a perfectly new world! What a stupendous crowd of sentient agents! What an utter solitude, in comparison, that world of living beings of which alone his senses had been competent to take any clear account before! And then let him consider, whether it be in his power, without plunging into gross absurdity, to form any other idea of the creation and separate subsistence of these beings, than that each of them is the distinct object of the attention and the power of that one Spirit in which all things subsist. Let him, lastly, extend the view to the width of the whole terrestrial field, of our mundane system, of the universe,—with the added thought how long such a creation has existed, and is to exist!

And now, with such a view of what that Spirit is doing, has been doing through an unimaginable lapse of ages, and may do through an unbounded futurity,—is it within the possibilities of human presumption and absurdity, vast as they are, to do any thing *more* presumptuous and absurd, than to pretend to decide beforehand what is beyond the competence of the power, or out of proportion for the benevolence of that Spirit? Yes, it *is* within those possibilities; for the presumption and absurdity may be inconceivably aggravated by that decision being

made in express and intentional contradiction to a powerful combination of evidence, that he actually *has* done a given work of signal mercy to the human race.

The topic of the infinite multitude of beings impalpable and invisible from their minuteness, attesting, in every spot of the earth, a Divine care and energy indefatigably acting on each, is vigorously illustrated and applied by our Author, who considers the infidel objection as by this time fairly disposed of. It is hardly necessary to recapitulate; but the argument stands briefly thus: No inference drawn from the stupendous extent and magnificence of the whole creation, is of the slightest authority, unless it consists with the inferences justly to be drawn from what we know of particular parts; the antichristian inference drawn from that magnificent whole is decisively contradicted by the known facts in this particular part that we inhabit, which give such a demonstration of infinite greatness fixed in benevolent attention on indefinite littleness, while superintending the mighty aggregate of all things, as to leave no ground for a presumption that such an interposition as that affirmed by Christianity, implies too great a measure of Divine attention and action toward man, to be believed: therefore it may be believed, and authoritatively demands to be believed, *if it comes with due evidence of its own*. The whole object of the argument is to show that the ground is perfectly clear for that evidence to come with its full appropriate force: the statement of that evidence was no part of the Author's object.

At the close of this argument, one or two considerations may deserve to be briefly adverted to. The infidels whose objection the Doctor is resisting, would never have thought of raising that objection as against that theory of Christianity which has in recent times assumed to itself, as its exclusive right, the distinction of "rational." And to professors of that system our author's whole effort of argument and eloquence appears, with the exception of the display of the Modern Astronomy, little better than a piece of splendid impertinence; since there could be nothing very wonderful or mysterious in the circum-

stance of God's appointing and qualifying, among any race of his rational but fallible creatures, a succession of individuals, of the mere nature of that race, to be teachers of truth and patterns of moral excellence to the rest, and in distinguishing one of them by the endowment of a larger portion of light and virtue than any of the others. It is only against what we shall not hesitate to denominate the evangelical theory, which is founded on the doctrine of a divine incarnation and an atoning sacrifice, that the objection in question can be advanced with any serious force.

And this suggests another consideration. This being assumed as the true theory, a doubt may perhaps be raised, whether the preacher's argument from the astonishing extent and distinctness of the attention and care exercised by the Deity on this most inconsiderable of his creatures, be available or strictly applicable; whether there be any thing so analogous between the natural and providential economy and a dispensation so signally peculiar as that of redemption, as to admit of an argument from the evidence of the one to the probability of the other. The Doctor fully assumes this analogy.

For our feeble powers of contemplating the government of the Almighty, and for facility of proper instruction, there may be an advantage in our usual mode of viewing that government as distinguished into separate departments, as of nature, providence, and grace. But we should greatly doubt whether, in a higher contemplation, this notion of separate departments would not vanish away. For if, in the first place, we endeavour to elevate our thoughts to the divine nature, in contemplation of any of the attributes,—the power, for instance, or the goodness,—we cannot conceive of that attribute in any other way than as a perfectly *simple* quality, than, if we may presume to apply such an expression, a homogeneous element; capable of an infinite diversity of modes of operation and degrees of manifestation, but not consisting of a combination of several distinguishable modes of the quality, each specifically applicable to a distinct department of the divine government.

If, in the next place, we descend to the view of this world as a scene of that government, we may, on a slight general inspection, seem to distinguish several departments so dissimilar to one another, as to have but a very partial relation or mutual dependence ; each existing as if chiefly for itself, and each requiring not only an appropriate mode of the operation of the divine power or goodness, but an appropriate modification in the attributes themselves ; and we shall speak accordingly, of the kingdom of nature, providence, and grace. But, if we think long, and comprehensively, and deeply, these artificial and arbitrary lines of demarcation will gradually melt from sight ; while instead of them there will become visible the grand lines of one vast system, lines running throughout it in all directions, evincing a perfect relation through all that we had regarded as almost independent parts ; or rather evincing a *unity* of economy, consisting of an infinity of particulars combined with divine art. And therefore, though some of these particulars will appear prominent, by a richer lustre of the divine goodness, they will still stand in an inseparable relation to all the other particulars in which that goodness is manifested, while all these other particulars stand in a contributive connexion, and a relative value, to those richest and best.

It must follow, that it is incorrect and absurd to say, that the striking manifestations of the divine power and goodness in a department of what we call the world of nature, are of an order so perfectly foreign to the principle of a certain other and far greater affirmed manifestation of those attributes, as to furnish no analogy by which to combat the objected improbability of that greater manifestation.

But suppose we place out of the argument, the marvellous evidences, revealed by the microscope, of the determination of the attributes of the Infinite Spirit to the most diminutive objects, and consider only the exquisite minuteness of their unremitted exercise towards man. *He*, at least, is a *system*, in which each part and circumstance is in strict relation to all the other parts

and circumstances. Both from the nature of the case, and from numberless illustrations of fact, it is evident that the apparently slightest circumstances of his being and condition may have a vital connexion with the most important. There is no dis severing the human individual into independent portions, to be the subjects, respectively, of unconnected economies of divine government. It may be assumed that God does nothing for him purely and exclusively *as an animal*, but that his whole combined nature is kept in view in the divine management. The natural providence, if we may so call it, and the moral government, must be inseparably combined in one process, which cannot leave untouched the spiritual part. But then, it cannot be alleged that the astonishingly condescending and minute attention, which we see to be exercised by the Divine Being upon a thousand small particulars in the nature and condition of man, is an agency so foreign to the interests of his soul, that no inference can be drawn from it relative to the probability of the highest possible expedient adopted for those interests by that Being.

While, however, we think our author is perfectly warranted in the course of argument he has pursued, it is not to be denied that in a few instances he has, inadvertently, fallen into expressions which do injustice to the surpassing *degree* and the transcendent *mode* of the manifestation of the divine goodness as given in the great expedient of redemption. The relation prevailing through all the agencies of the divine goodness, comports, it is unnecessary to say, with a stupendous superiority of degree in which that goodness is manifested in some parts of the government of the Almighty. One of the expressions we allude to occurs in the following passage :

"Let such a revelation tell me as much as it may of God letting himself down," (this refers to the economy of Mediation,) "for the benefit of one single province of his dominions, *this is no more than what I see lying scattered, in numberless examples, before me*; and running through the whole line of my recollections; and meeting me in every walk of observation to which I can betake myself; and, now that the microscope has unveiled the wonders of another region, I see strewed around me, with a profusion which baffles my every attempt to comprehend it, the evidence

that there is no one portion of the universe of God too minute for his notice, or too humble for the visitations of his care."—p. 116.

We have justly ascribed such expressions to "inadvertency," for the Doctor loses no occasion for enforcing the glorious supremacy of the dispensation of Christ over the other illustrations of the divine benignity; nor can any terms be more animated than those which he has employed to this effect, in some passages of the discourse on the argument of which we have so very disproportionately enlarged.

The direct and conclusive argument against the infidel objection closes here. It rests its strength on indisputable matters of fact. And it leaves the infidel literally not an atom to stand upon; for it animates even atoms to an implacable hostility against him.

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In drawing towards an end of our analysis of these Discourses, we think it may not be amiss to repeat that Dr. Chalmers uniformly recognizes the complete sufficiency of the evidences for Christianity, independently, altogether, of the questions which he is discussing: inasmuch that that evidence would remain invincible if his whole argument were judged or proved to have failed;—that is to say, if it were judged or proved, in the first place, that the astonishing expenditure, shall we call it, of the exercise of the Divine Attributes upon the individuals of an inconceivable multitude of the most diminutive beings, and upon an inconceivable number of minute particulars and circumstances relating to man, (beings and circumstances so stupendously small as parts of the universal system), is *not* enough to furnish any argument against the improbability of such an expedient for human happiness as that which revelation declares;—and if it could be proved, in the next place, that this revealed economy of redemption disclaims any extension, or, at least, is silent as to any extension, of its relations and utilities to any other portion of the great system extraneous to the sphere of human existence.

Supposing the matter to be acknowledged to be thus, and supposing it to be then acknowledged, that we cannot

understand how it can consist with the rules of proportion in the government of so vast a whole, for the Governor to do so great a thing for a most inconsiderable part,—this leaves the positive evidence in undiminished authority. This acknowledgment of ignorance amounts to this and no more,—that we cannot advance a certain philosophic argument, *a priori*, in corroboration of that evidence. The absence of that argument detracts not a particle from the arguments which are present, and on which alone the cause ever professed to rest its demonstration. This acknowledgment of ignorance is simply a confession that there is utter *mystery* on a side of the subject where it would have been gratifying to be able to find the means of raising a philosophic argument in favour of Christianity. And, verily, mystery, as relative to the human understanding, forms a marvellously pertinent allegation against an asserted and strongly evidenced fact in the Divine government of the universe!

The case is quite changed, if a man, instead of this acknowledgment of ignorance of the rule of proportion in that government, makes an avowal of knowledge; if he says he can judge of that rule, and can see that the asserted fact in question is incompatible with it, and therefore must disbelieve that assertion, in contempt of all the alleged positive evidence. But we have then “a short method” with him. We have to tell him that he is to take the consequences of a flagrantly irreligious, if not unphilosophical presumption; for that he *cannot* judge of that rule, and therefore it must be at his peril, that in the strength of his ignorant assumption to do so, he dares make light of that evidence.

Perhaps it was not strictly necessary to make these remarks at this length; Dr. Chalmers has several times used expressions to preserve it clearly in the reader's recollection, that the Christian evidence is not to be implicated in any way of dependence, in the smallest degree, in a course of argument which is purely subsidiary; but it may not be impertinent to have marked the distinction in a somewhat more formal manner in the above sentences. That Christianity is in no possible degree

committed to hazard upon the force or failure of the pleading, is the more necessary to be kept in view in reading the latter discourses in the series, because in them the author indulges in a train of speculation, supported in a great degree upon conjectures and a looser kind of analogies than those which have served him so well in the preceding part of the course ; conjectures, however, and analogies, which he does not mistake for certainties and direct proofs.

It might have been a sufficient service to Christianity, to make good the negative argument in its favour,—to show the futility of attempting to support against it a charge of being absurd and incredible, even though it did, by the necessary constitution of such an economy, and by avowals in its own professed revelation, confine itself exclusively to the interests of man. But the preacher concludes his Third Discourse with the assertion, that the vindication may be carried forward to a positive argument, confronting the infidel objection ; for that revelation avows, what reason might well surmise of such an economy, that it extends, in very important relations, to a much wider sphere, than that of the exclusive human interests. Accordingly, the Fourth Discourse proceeds to “ The knowledge of man’s moral history in the distant places of the Creation ;” and it is followed by another on “ The sympathy that is felt for man in the distant places of creation.” The wide sweep of reasoning and imagination over the distant regions of the moral world, terminates in the Sixth Discourse, “ On the contest for an ascendancy over man, amongst the higher orders of intelligence.”

With regard to the general object pursued through this latter part of the course, we shall acknowledge at once that we are extremely sceptical, while we do most willing justice to the ingenious argumentation, and picturesque illustration, and buoyant and soaring fancy, which the preacher has so largely displayed in his progress. On a cool consideration of the subject, it would seem that the scriptural grounds for supporting the speculation, are very slight ; and it may perhaps be

suspected that in the weight which our author rests on these, and in the degree of confidence with which he adduces arguments from analogy, and surmises of general probability, he may have a little transgressed the rigid rules of speculation so justly applauded in the earlier discourses.

The Fourth and Fifth Discourses have for their texts,—"Which things angels desire to look into;" and, "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance." No fact beyond the limits of our world is more prominent in the declarations of the Bible, than the existence of a high order of intelligences denominated angels. The equivocal and the lower application of the term in a number of instances can deduct nothing from the palpable evidence of the fact. But who and what are angels? The effect of an assemblage of passages relating to them in the Bible, the descriptions, narratives, and allusions, would seem to give an idea widely different from that of stationary residents in particular parts of the creation,—an idea, rather, of perpetual ministerial agency, in a diversified distribution of appointments, many of them occasional and temporary, in the fulfilment of which numbers of them visit or sojourn in this world. On the ground of analogy we may be allowed to surmise, that there may be spiritual ministers of this sublime order appointed to all other worlds in the creation. Now, as to the angels, that portion of them at least whose appointments have a relation to this world, there cannot be a moment's question whether they are acquainted with the condition of man, and take an interest in the economy of God's moral government over him. The Scriptures directly affirm it, and in many ways imply it. But this proves nothing as to the knowledge or interest concerning man among the respective inhabitants of the distant parts of the creation. It is conceivable that there may be an indefinite reciprocation of intelligence among some of the angels commissioned to many regions of the universe, and they may, for any thing we can know, impart, in

the scenes of their ministry, some portion of the intelligence thus reciprocated: on the contrary, they may maintain an inviolable silence. But, indeed, though this inter-communication of these diversely commissioned agents may be conceived possible to some extent, no notion can be entertained of its approaching to completeness and universality. This would be to attribute faculties too vast for created intelligences,—too vast, because commensurate, in each individual, with the whole creation of God, if there be such ministerial agents deputed to every part of that creation. And however stupendously capacious their faculties might be, it is not conceivable that such a boundless diversity and multitude of contemplations and interests could consist with the devoted unremitting attention to the specific objects of their respective appointments.

Next, with regard to the *inhabitants*, properly so denominated, of the unnumbered millions of distinct worlds in the creation, (the truth of that theory being assumed,) there would seem to be insurmountable objections to the notion of their all receiving large information and feeling deep interest concerning the people and transactions of this planet. Let it be considered, that it is beyond all doubt that in every world where the Creator has placed intelligent beings, (we leave out of the account whatever region it may be to which the fallen angels are consigned,) he has made successive, diversified, and wonderful manifestations of his attributes in the peculiar economy of that world itself. It is not conceivable that he should not have made continually such disclosures of himself to them, carried on such a government over them, furnished so many proofs and monitions of their relation to him, summoned their powers so imperiously to the utmost service to him of which they are capable, that they will have, within their own peculiar sphere, copious interest and employment for their faculties during a large portion of their time. It is even reasonable to suppose that, be these distinct inhabited spheres as numerous as the most ambitious conjecture of an angel can make them, there have been,

in the history of each one of them, without exception, some extraordinary and stupendous events and moral phenomena, standing in majestic pre-eminence for the contemplation of the inhabitants, and involving, as interventions of the Almighty, such glory, and miracle, and mystery, that "angels may desire to look into them." Why should it not be so? It plainly gives a loftier idea of that Being, that he should do such great things in all the worlds of his dominion, than that he should do them in only a few instances, or in only one, and that he should do them in an endless diversity of form and mode, than in only one. But if the fact should be so, consider what a countless multitude of things will deserve, perhaps equally deserve, as signal manifestations of the Divinity, to be brought within the view of those tribes of intelligent creatures, whose expanded faculties and exalted position render it possible for them to extend their adoring contemplations afar over the dominions of God. It would follow, that their regards cannot be fixed on the economy of this world with so much of a concentration of attention and interest, as our author seems inclined to represent.

As to the conjecture that many, or that all the worlds of the creation may have a *direct* interest in the economy of redemption, as having, possibly, like our race, incurred the crime and calamity of a moral lapse, the preacher only throws it out as one among a variety of imaginative surmisings, and is evidently not desirous to make it the basis, or a part of any positive theory. We think it cannot be entertained for one moment. The most submissive humility on all subjects relating to the divine government, and its mysteries and possibilities, cannot preclude an irresistible impression that the idea of so wide a prevalence of evil in the universe, is absolutely incompatible with faith in the goodness of its Creator and Governor. Let any devout mind dwell awhile on the thought, and try whether it is not so. The prevalence of evil in only this one world, is an inexpressibly mysterious and awful fact; insomuch, that all attempts to explain *how* it is consistent with the perfect goodness of an Almighty Being, have left us in utter despair of any

approach toward comprehending it. A pious spirit, not deluded by any of the vain and presumptuous theories of philosophical or theological explanation, while looking toward this unfathomable subject, can repose only in a general confidence that the dreadful fact, of the prevalence of evil in this planet, is in some unimaginable way combined with such relations, and such a state of the grand whole of the divine empire, that it is perfectly consistent with infinite goodness in Him that made and directs all things. But therefore this confidence cannot subsist on any supposition that the other regions of that empire, are also in any great proportion ravaged by this direful enemy and destroyer of happiness. On any such supposition, mystery changes into horror.

By the way, this topic supplies a mighty argument for that theory of an ample plurality of worlds of intelligent beings, so probable on philosophic grounds, and so consonant with sublime ideas of the Creator's power and glory. Unless we admit that theory, we assign to evil such a fearful proportion to the good in the condition of the intelligent creation, as to darken into intolerable gloom the collective view of its economy. How vast must the moral system be, to contain such a magnitude of good as to reduce this horrible mass of evil, existing and accumulating through thousands of years, to a mere circumstance, scarcely discernible as an exception to the estimate, that "all is good," merged and lost in the glory of the comprehensive whole!—Not, indeed, that by a reference to that unknown whole, we can in the smallest degree diminish the mystery of the existence of evil in this one world,—of its existence at all in the creation of an infinitely good and powerful Being; but we do, in this idea of the immensity of that creation, obtain a ground for the assurance, that the proportion of good among the creatures of the Almighty, may all but infinitely transcend that of evil.

While we acknowledge that, for ourselves, we feel it necessary to entertain this idea of the immensity of the intelligent creation, in order to the full and consolatory effect of our faith in the goodness of the Supreme Being,

we shall naturally wonder at the happier temperament of those theologians, if such there be, who meet with no very disquieting difficulty on this whole field of speculation ; who, while limiting their view of the intelligent creation to this world, (combined with the assemblages of angels and departed human spirits) and seeing in this world, through its whole duration hitherto, such a prevalence of moral evil, that they deem an immense majority of the race consigned to eternal destruction, can yet, by the aid of some superficial theory of human volition, and some lightly assumed and presumptuous maxims respecting penal example in the order of the Divine government, escape, with great apparent facility, into great apparent complacency, from the overwhelming awfulness of the economy.

We should crave excuse for repetition while we try to select terms somewhat more precise, to say, that upon the theory of the immensity of the intelligent creation, we may take ground for the presumption that the rectitude and happiness, either absolutely perfect, or but slightly defective, of an inconceivable number of rational creatures, constitutes, over the vast general scene, a direct and infinitely clear manifestation of the Creator's goodness, leaving the solemn mystery, in this respect, to rest chiefly on this one small province of the universal dominion ; that presumption aiding our adoration, though it does not extenuate the gloom of this mystery as respecting this world considered exclusively.

But to return, for a moment, to the more immediate topics of the Discourses. They glow with eloquent, poetical, striking representations of the earnest impassioned interest with which all the good beings, of even so stupendous a multitude of worlds, may be conceived to regard our race, as a family lapsed from their allegiance and their felicity, and under a dispensation of recovery. There is no pretending to know how much it is reasonable to conjecture on such a subject. A great deal of generous regard for the human race, may, with sobriety of imagination, be attributed to those ministers of the Almighty, who are charged with beneficent offices in the

economy of this world. But when we think of the inhabitants of the universe, according to the computation all along maintained, or rather the theory, which defies all computation ; when we consider that self-love must be the primary law of all created conscious existences, and that in all their localities and states this self-love will have its *immediate* sphere ; when we seek to imagine a medium of announcement or representation by which our transactions and concerns should be vividly and protractedly impressed on the intellect and affections of the remotest foreigners of the creation ; and when we reflect, according to what we have already suggested, that for the contemplation of those tribes or orders, whose faculties may be of a capacity to admit, and whose happiness may be made greatly to consist in their receiving, a sublimely enlarged knowledge of the creation, there will be an infinity of memorable and amazing facts of the divine government,—when we consider all this, we confess we cannot, without being haunted with an invincible sense of very great extravagance, listen to a strain of eloquence which would go the length of representing all the wise and amiable intelligences of all the systems of the universe, as employing a large proportion of the energies of their being on the history and destiny of our race.

The grand argument for assuming such a concentration of attention and interest upon this world, is the extraordinary and transcendent nature of the expedient for human redemption. And well may that argument be urged to the extent of an assurance, that if the Blessed and Only Potentate wills that the most signal facts of his government in one world should be celebrated in others, this expedient must stand in the most eminent order of the facts so celebrated. But when that argument is pressed to so extreme a consequence, as in our author's fervid conjectures and assumptions, one or two considerations will suggest themselves.

In the first place, there seems to be some inadvortency, common to him with many divines and pious men, in expressing the mode of apprehending the in-

terposition of Deity, as manifested in the person of the Messiah. He sometimes falls into language which would do little less than imply that the Divine Nature, as subsisting in that mysterious connexion with the human, subjected itself to a temporary limitation, and, if we may apply such a term, monopoly, to that one purpose and agency of human redemption ; as if Deity, so combined, contracted, and depressed itself from the state of Deity in the abstract, sustaining some suspension of the exercise of those infinite attributes which can be limited to no one object, or operation, or world, for one instant.—Not that any such limitation is *intended* so to be implied ; but, under the defective effect of a language which bears a semblance of such an import, the argument in question (that from the pre-eminent marvellousness and benevolence of the expedient for redemption) is carried to an exaggerated conclusion. Of this deceptive character, we think, is the parallel which begins in page 150, between this great act of Divine interposition, and the supposed instance of a monarch of an extensive empire, who should, for a brief space of time, a few hours, or a day, (which would, as the author remarks, be infinitely longer in proportion to the whole time of his reign, than the duration of the mediatorial period on earth as compared with the eternity of the divine government,) lay aside the majesty and the concerns of his general government, to make a visit of compassion to the humble cottage of some distressed or guilty family. It is obvious that this illustration should imply (or the virtue of the parallel is lost) that “in turning him to our humble habitations,” (page 152) “the King, Eternal, Immortal, and Invisible,” (in these absolute terms of Divinity, the visitant is designated,) did in some manner withdraw and descend from the full amplitude of the glory and exercise of the unalienable attributes of Deity. But surely, whatever was the mode of that mysterious combination of the divine with an inferior nature, we are required religiously to beware of all approach toward such an idea as that of a *modification* of the Supreme nature, and to preserve the solemn idea of a Being, absolute, unalterable, and neces-

sarily always in entire possession and exercise of all that constitutes its supremacy and perfection. But the divine Nature "manifested" in the human in the person of the Messiah, continued then and ever in such an unlimited state of glory and action, that it might be then, and at every moment of the mediatorial dispensation, making innumerable other manifestations of itself, and performing infinite wonders of grace and power altogether foreign, as the remote scenes of their display, from this world and the interposition for its redemption; an interposition, which could in no manner interfere with any other interpositions, of a kind indefinitely dissimilar from it and one other, which the Sovereign Agent might will to effect in other regions.

Since, therefore, the inexplicable indwelling in the person of the Mediator, could in no manner affect the plenary presence and energy of the divine Nature, as while so indwelling, pervading also all the other realms of the universe; and since, while that mighty essence imparted immeasurable virtue to the mediatorial work and sacrifice, it yet could not sustain any difficulty, degradation, or injury;—as the griefs, the dreadful inflictions for the sin of the world, fell exclusively upon a subordinate being, belonging to our own economy;—there would not seem to be an imperious reason for the universality of the inhabitants of the creation to be occupied with a paramount interest in the transaction, though so illustrious a display of the Almighty's justice and mercy toward one section of his dominion.

In the next place, we would notice a still more striking inadvertency in our excellent author's representations. In maintaining the probability of the knowledge and celebration of the wonderful expedient for the redemption of man, far through the numberless abodes of intellectual existence, he indulges habitually a strain of descriptive sentiment which would be precisely applicable, *if* that economy were designed to be, or were in fact, redeemingly comprehensive of the whole world of men. But then, is it applicable, as the awful truth stands displayed before us? He keeps quite out of view what that divine

intervention was *not* designed to accomplish, as made evident in the actual state in life, and after death, of a dread proportion of the human race; and forms his conceptions of the manner of interest with which innumerable pure and happy tribes of the universe may be imagined to contemplate our world, as if this reality of things should not be apparent to them. It is too obvious how deeply this reality affects the ground of his sanguine and exulting presumptions of such an immensely extended interest and gratulation.

We should advert to those passages of Scripture which he has collected in page 147.

“And while we, whose prospect reaches not beyond the narrow limits of the corner we occupy, look on the dealings of God in the world, as carrying in them all the insignificance of a provincial transaction; God himself, whose eye reaches to places which our eye hath not seen, nor our ear heard of, neither hath it entered into our imagination to conceive, stamps a universality on the whole matter of the Christian salvation, by such revelations as the following:—That he is to gather together, in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth, even in him;—and that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;—and that by him God reconciled all things unto himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.”

We do not know where to seek a rule of interpretation for these passages, the most essential expressions of which—“all things”—and “things in heaven”—are among the most indefinite phrases in the Bible. It cannot be *proved* that their meaning does not comprehend more than such a portion of superhuman beings as may be placed within a circumscribed economy appropriate to our world—as some of the angels evidently are. But the circumstance which is fatal to a very ambitious interpretation of them in their higher reference, is, the necessity of putting an exceedingly restricted one on them in their lower. How greatly less must be intended than the literal import of the expression, “all things in earth,” is shown in the history and the actual and prospective state of the earth’s inhabitants.

We must not prolong a course of remarks in which we are sensible of having been unpardonably prolix, by commenting on the Discourse, “On the contest for an

ascendency over man, among the higher orders of intelligence. The first part of it is employed, at rather perhaps too great a length for a printed work, in repetition and recapitulation ; but this might be highly proper in the discourse as delivered, at a considerable distance of time from the former ones in the series. The exhibition of the warfare is in a high tone of martial energy. And what cause we have to wish, as Dr. Chalmers did in an able sermon, published a few years since, that the spirit and splendour of oratory and poetry might, through a heaven-inflicted fatality, desert, henceforward, all attempted celebrations of any other warfare than that between the cause of God and the power of evil, as put forth in infernal or in human agency !

We have no disposition to accompany this portion of our ardent speculator's career, with exceptions to what we may deem its excesses of sentiment, and imagery, and confident conjecture. What we are most tempted, to remark upon, in the description of the great contest carrying on between the intelligent powers of light and darkness, for a domination over the destiny of man, is a something too much like an implication that this destiny can really be, in any possible measure, a depending question between created antagonists, or that it can appear to them, on either side, to be so, while both of them must be aware of the absolute certainty that the will of the Almighty is infinitely sovereign over all things. Indeed, this consideration renders it profoundly mysterious that there can be any contest at all. And to say that the existence of the contest is mysterious, is saying, in effect, that it is impossible to attain a probable conception how the parties are actuated. The sense of this has always, with us, interfered with the interest of the former part of the *Paradise Lost*. There appears an enormous absurdity in the presumptions and calculations on which the delinquent spirits adopt and prosecute their enterprise ; an absurdity, we mean, on the part of the poet, in making them to act from calculations, which it was absolutely impossible their enlarged understandings could entertain.

Nevertheless, we have the testimony, express and by diversified implications, of the Holy Scriptures, for the fact of a formidable moral dissension among the higher order of intelligences, in which the condition of the human race has been awfully involved.

The concluding Discourse is on a topic of very serious and melancholy interest,—the possibility to minds of feeling, and taste, and imagination, of being elated to noble contemplations, and affected by fine emotions, of a nature that shall seem to be intimately related to genuine piety, and may easily be mistaken for it, while yet the heart is destitute of all that is essential in the experience of religion. Nothing could be better judged than the placing of this subject in broad and prominent view at the close of such a train of contemplations. How possible it is that hundreds of readers may have expatiated in thought with emotions of sublime and delightful solemnity, on the scene of astronomical magnificence displayed in the introductory Discourses; and inasmuch as the glory of that scene is the glory of the Almighty Creator, may have deemed their emotions to partake of, or be identical with, religious devotion,—a sentiment and a state to which there were tests existing to convict them of being strangers. The preacher has forcibly illustrated, in many other forms, this treacherous semblance of religious vitality. And the feeling awakened at the view of so many interesting emotions, still useless, and by their deceptive influence, worse than useless, to the subjects of them, is so mournful, that the reader is almost impelled to relieve himself by seeking cause to think that some of the representations are over-wrought, and some of the decisions too severe; and he is tempted to be gratified at obtaining an alleviation of the painful effect of some of the stern judgments, at the expense of the judge, whose occasional violences of oratory, and negligences of discrimination, afford a hint that his sentence cannot be without appeal. Much important and alarming truth, however, there is in this Discourse. It contains the *elements* of an eminently useful and warning instruction. But the subject requires a much more ela-

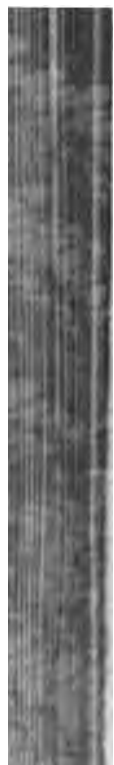
borate and definite discussion; and we wish Dr. Chalmers may take another opportunity of treating it formally with the deliberate, best exertion of his mind.

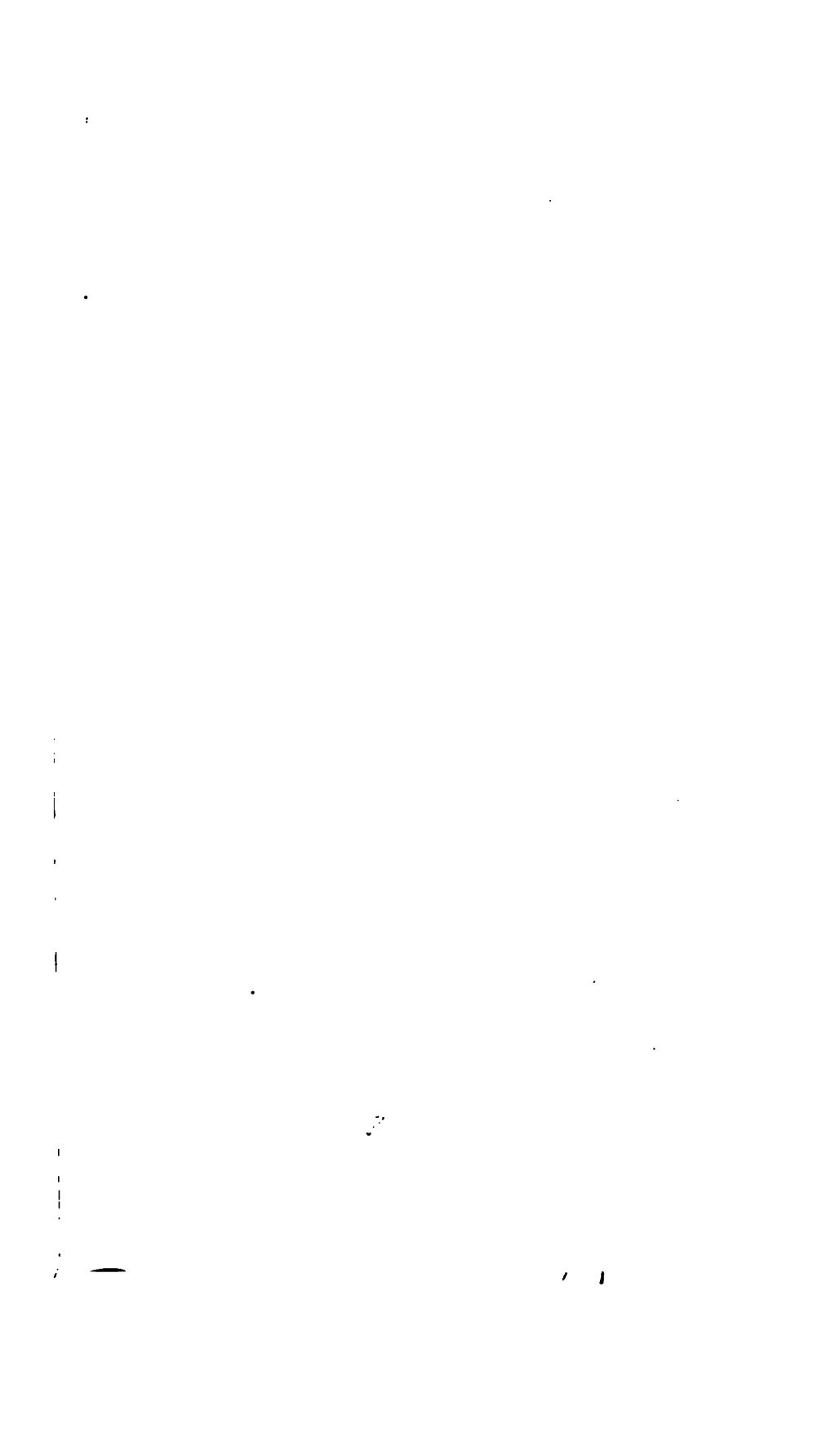
On the merely literary character of his composition we shall content ourselves with a very few words. We cannot dissemble that we wish he would put his style under a strongly alterative discipline. No readers can be more sensible to its glow and richness of colouring, and its not unfrequent happy combinations of words; but there is no denying that it is guilty of a rhetorical march, a sonorous pomp, a "showy sameness;" a want, therefore of simplicity and flexibility; withal, a perverse and provoking grotesqueness, a frequent descent, strikingly incongruous with the prevailing elatedness of tone, to the lowest colloquialism, and all together an unpardonable license of strange phraseology. The number of uncouth, and fantastic, and we may fairly say barbarous phrases, that might be transcribed, is most unconscionable. Such a style needs a strong hand of reform; and the writer may be assured it contains life and soul enough to endure the most unrelenting process of correction, the most compulsory trials to change its form, without hazard of extinguishing its spirit.

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